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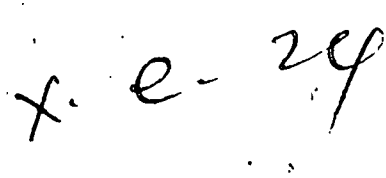

TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE,

IN THE YEARS

1768, 1769, 1770, 1771, 1772, & 1773.

BY

JAMES BRUCE OF KINNAIRD, ESQ.
F. R. S.

X. e. 24

THE THIRD EDITION,

CORRECTED AND ENLARGED.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

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VOL. IV.

——— Si volvere priscos
Non piget annales, hic, et victoria fixit
Præcipitem Romana gradum; quem non gravis Auster
Reppulit, incultis non squallens Parthia campis,
Non æstu *Meroe*, non frigore Rhenus et Albis.
BUCHANANUS.

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TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

BOOK IV.—CONTINUED.

TECLA HAIMANOUT I.

From 1704 to 1706.

Writes in favour of Du Roule—Defeats the Rebels —Is assassinated while Hunting.

Elias the Armenian, of whom we have already spoken, and who was charged with letters of protection from Yasous to meet M. du Roule at Sennaar, had reached within three days journey of that capital, when he heard that King Yasous was assasinated. Terrified at the news, he returned in the utmost haste to Gondar, and presented the letters, which had been written by Yasous, to be renewed by his son, King Tecla Haimanout. Tecla Haimanout read his father's

letters, and approved of their contents, ordering them to be copied in his own name; and Elias, without delay set out with them. I have inserted a translation of these letters, which were originally written in Arabic, and seem to me to be of the few that are authentic, among those many which have been published as coming from Abyssinia.

"The king, Tecla Haimanout, son of the king of the church of Ethiopia, king of a thousand churches *.

"On the part of the powerful august king, arbiter of nations, shadow of God upon earth, the guide of kings who profess the religion of the Messiah, the most powerful of Christian kings, he that maintains order between Mahometans and Christians, protector of the boundaries of Alexandria, observer of the commandments of the gospel, descended of the line of the prophets David and Solomon,—may the blessing of Israel be upon our prophet and upon them.—To the king Baady, son of the king Ounsa, may his reign be full of happiness, being a prince endowed with these rare qualities that deserve the highest praises, as governing his kingdom with distinguished wisdom, and by an order full of equity.—The king of France, who is a Christian, wrote a letter seven or eight years ago, by which he signified to me, that he wished to open a trade for the advantage of his subjects and mine, which request we have granted. We come at present to understand, that he has sent us presents by a man whose name is du Roule, who has likewise several others along with him, and that these people have been arrested at your town of Sennaar. We require of you, therefore, to set them immediately at liberty, and to suffer them to come to us with all the marks of ho-

* The seal given in Le Grande's Book is not the king's; it is the invention of some Mahometan employed to write the letters.

nour; and that you should pay regard to the ancient friendship which has always subsisted between our predecessors, since the time of the king of Sedgid and the king of Kim, to the present day *. We also demand of you to suffer all the subjects of the king of France to pass, and all those that come with letters of his consul, who is at Cairo, as all such Frenchmen come for trade only, being of the same religion with us. We likewise recommend to you, that you permit to pass freely all French Christians, Cophts, and Syrians who follow our rites, observing our religion, and who intend coming into our country; and that you do not suffer any of those who are contrary to our religion to pass, such as the monk Joseph and his companions, whom you may keep at Sennaar, it being in no shape our intention to suffer them to come into our dominions, where they would occasion troubles, as being enemies to our faith. God grant you your desires."—Wrote the 10th of Zulkade, Anno 1118, *i. e.* the 21st of January 1706.

* * The direction is—"To king Baady, son of king Ounsa, may God favour him with his grace.

The first thing I remark upon this letter is, the mention of the ancient peace and friendship which subsisted between the predecessors of these two princes now corresponding. It was a friendship, he says, that had endured from the time of the king of Sedgid, and the king of Kim, to the present day.

The kingdom of Sennaar, as we shall see, was but a modern one, and recently established by conquest

* The kings of Sedgid and Kim may have been princes of Pagan states on the N. W. of Abyssinia, from whom the kings of the Fungi descended.—E.

over the Arabs. Therefore the kingdoms of Sedgid and of Kim were, before that conquest, places whence this black nation came that had established their sovereignty at Sennaar by conquest: from which, therefore, I again infer, there never was any war, conquest, or tribute between Abyssinia and that state.

The Arabs, who fed their flocks near the frontiers of the two countries, were often plundered by the kings of Abyssinia making descents into Atbara; but this was never reckoned a violation of peace between the two sovereigns. On the contrary, as the motive of the Arabs, for coming south into the frontiers of Abyssinia, was to keep themselves independent, and out of the reach of Sennaar, when the king of Abyssinia fell upon them there, he was understood to do that monarch service, by driving them down farther within his reach. The Baharnagash has been always at war with them; they are tributary to him for eating his grass and drinking his water, and nothing that he ever does to them gives any trouble or inquietude to Sennaar. It is interpreted as maintaining his ancient dominion over the Shepherds, those of Sennaar being a new power, and accounted usurpers.

M. de Maillet, nor M. le Grande, his historian, have not thought fit to explain who the monk Joseph was, mentioned in this letter. Now it is certain, that when Murat and Poncet had returned from Abyssinia, there was a missionary of the minor friars, who arrived in Ethiopia, had an audience of the king, and wrote a letter in his name to the pope, wherein he has foisted many improbabilities and falsehoods; and concludes with declaring on the part of Yasous, that he submits to the see of Rome in the same manner the kings his predecessors had submitted. He makes Yasous speak Latin, too; and it is perfectly plain, from

the * whole letter, that, though he writes it himself, he cannot conceal that the king, Yasous, wished him very much away, and was very uneasy at his stay at Gondar. Who this was we know not, but suppose it was one of those assassins of M. du Roule, carrying on a private intrigue, without participation of the consul, some of whom were afterwards detected in Walkayt in the reign of David IV.

As for Elias, the forerunner of the French embassy, now become the only remains of it, he continued in Abyssinia (to judge by his letter) in great poverty, till the year 1718, immediately after which he went over to Arabia Felix, and first wrote from Mocha to M. de Maillet, consul at Cairo, as it will appear in the reign of David IV., where I have inserted his letter. That written to M. du Roule in the name of Yasous; that of Tecla Haimanout to the Basha and Divan of Cairo, I have now here inserted, because I have advanced facts founded upon them.

Translation of an Arabic Letter from the King of Abyssinia to M. du Roule.

"THE king Tecla Haimanout, king of the established church, son of the king of a thousand churches.

"This letter cometh forth from the venerable, august king, who is the shadow of God, guide of Christian princes that are in the world, the most powerful of the Nazarean kings, observer of the commandments of the gospel, protector of the confines of Alexandria, he that maintaineth order between Mahometans and Christians, descended from the family of the prophets David and Solomon, upon whom be the blessings of

* See this letter, Le Grande, Rel. Hist. d'Abyssinie, p. 465—468; and an account of Father Joseph himself, p. 447.

Israel, may God make his happiness eternal, and his power perpetual, and protect his arms—So be it.—To his excellence the most virtuous and most prudent man du Roule, a Frenchman sent to us, may God preserve him, and make him arrive at a degree of eminence.—So be it.—Elias, your interpreter, whom you sent before you, being arrived here, has been well received. We have understood that you are sent to us on the part of the king of France our brother, and are surprised that you have been detained at Sennaar. We send to you at present a letter for king Baady, in order that he may set you at liberty, and not do you any injury, nor to those that are with you, but may behave in a manner that is proper both for you and to us, according to the religion of Elias that you sent, who is a Syrian; and all those that may come after you from the king of France our brother, or his consul at Cairo, shall be well received, whether they be ambassadors or private merchants, because we love those that are of our religion. We receive with pleasure those who do not oppose our laws, and we send away those that do oppose them. For this reason we do not receive immediately Joseph *, with all his companions, not choosing that such sort of people should appear in our presence, nor intending that they should pass Sennaar, in order to avoid troubles which may occasion the death of many; but with respect to you, have nothing to fear, you may come in all safety, and you shall be received with honour."—Written the 10th of the month Zulkade, Anno 1118, *i. e.* the 21st of January of the year 1706.

*** The address is—"Let the present be delivered to M. du Roule, at the town of Sennaar."

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* Vid. the letter as quoted above. These were the Fathers of the Mission established in Egypt.—E.

I shall only observe upon this letter, that all the priests, who had flocked to Sennaar before M. du Roule arrived there, disappeared upon his near approach to that city, after having prepared the mischief which directly followed. And, no sooner was the murder, which they before concerted, committed, than they all flocked back again, as if invited to a festival. M. de Maillet speaks of several of them in his letters, where he complains of the murder of du Roule, and says that they were then on their way to enter Abyssinia. Of these was this Joseph, whom Tecla Haimanout strictly prohibits to come farther than Sennaar, having seen what his father had written concerning him in the first letters Elias was charged with.

Others are mentioned in Elias's letter to the consul, as having been in Abyssinia. He calls them those of the league of Michael and Samuel, of whom we shall speak afterwards *. But, even though the French consul had ordered his nation to drive all the subjects of Sennaar from their houses and service, none of these missionaries were afraid to return and abide at Sennaar; because they knew the murder of the ambassador was the work of their own hands, and, without their instigation, would never have been committed.

The unlucky messenger, Elias, was again about to enter Sennaar, when he received information that du Roule had been assassinated. If he had fled hastily from this inauspicious place upon the murder of Yasous, his haste was now tenfold, as he considered himself engaged in the same circumstances that had involved M. du Roule's attendants in his misfortunes.

The king, upon hearing the account given by Elias

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* Michael and Samuel were two of the monks stoned afterwards in the time of David.—E.

of the melancholy fate of the ambassador at Sennaar, was so exasperated, that he gave immediate orders for recalling such of his troops as he had permitted to go to any considerable distance; and, in a council held for that purpose, he declared, that he considered the death of M. du Roule as an affront that immediately affected his crown and dignity. He was, therefore, determined not to pass it over, but to make the king of Sennaar sensible that he, as well as all the other kings upon earth, knew the necessity of observing the law of nations, and the bad consequence of perpetual retaliations that must follow the violation of it. In the mean time, thinking that the basha of Cairo was the cause of this, he wrote the following letter to him:

Translation of an Arabic Letter from the King of Abyssinia to the Basha and Divan of Cairo.

" To the Pacha, and Lords of the Militia of Cairo.

" On the part of the king of Abyssinia, the king Tecla Haimanout, son of the king of the church of Abyssinia.

" On the part of the august king, the powerful arbiter of nations, shadow of God upon earth, the guide of kings who profess the religion of the Messiah, the most powerful of all Christian kings, he who maintains order between Mahometans and Christians, protector of the confines of Alexandria, observer of the commandments of the gospel, heir from father to son of a most powerful kingdom, descended of the family of David and Solomon—may the blessing of Israel be upon our prophet, and upon them! may his happiness be durable, and his greatness lasting; and may his powerful army be always feared! To the most power-

ful lord, elevated by his dignity, venerable by his merits, distinguished by his strength and riches among all Mahometans, the refuge of all those that reverence him, who by his prudence governs and directs the armies of the noble empire, and commands his confines; victorious viceroy of Egypt, the four corners of which shall be always respected and defended—So be it. And to all the distinguished princes, judges, men of learning, and other officers, whose business it is to maintain order and good government, and to all commanders in general, may God preserve them all in their dignities, in the nobleness of their health. You are to know, that our ancestors never bore any envy to other kings, nor did they ever occasion them any trouble, or shew them any mark of hatred. On the contrary, they have, upon all occasions, given them proofs of their friendship, assisting them generously, relieving them in their necessities, as well in what concerns the caravan and pilgrims of Mecca in Arabia Felix, as in the Indies, in Persia, and other distant and out-of-the-way places, also by protecting distinguished persons in every urgent necessity.

"Nevertheless, the king of France our brother, who professes our religion and our law, having been induced thereto by some advances of friendship on our part such as are proper, sent an ambassador to us; I understand that you caused arrest him at Sennaar, and also another, by name Murat, the Syrian, whom you did put in prison also, though he was sent to that ambassador on our part, and by thus doing, you have violated the law of nations; as ambassadors of kings ought to be at liberty to go wherever they will; and it is a general obligation to treat them with honour, and not to molest or detain them; nor should they be subject to pay customs, or any sort of presents. We could very soon repay you in kind, if we

were inclined to revenge the insult you have offered to the man, Murat, sent on our part; the Nile would be sufficient to punish you, since God hath put into our power his fountain, his outlet and his increase, and that we can dispose of the same to do you harm; for the present we demand of, and exhort you, to desist from any future vexations towards our envoys, and not disturb us by detaining those who shall be sent towards you, but you shall let them pass, and continue their route without delay, coming and going wherever they will, freely for their own advantage, whether they are our subjects or Frenchmen; and whatever you shall do to or for them, we shall regard as done to or for ourselves."

*** The address is—"To the basha, princes, and lords governing the town of great Cairo, may God favour them with his goodness."

There are several things very remarkable in this letter. The king of Abyssinia values himself, and his predecessors, upon never having molested, or troubled any of his neighbours who were kings, nor borne any envy towards them. We are not then, to believe what we see often in history, that there was frequent war between Sennaar and Abyssinia, or that Sennaar was tributary to Abyssinia. That stripe of country, inhabited by the Shangalla, would, in this case, have been first conquered. But it is more probable, that the great difference of climate, which immediately takes place between the two kingdoms, the great want of water on the frontiers, barriers placed there by the hand of Nature, have been the means of keeping these kingdoms from having any mutual concerns; and so, indeed, we may guess by the utter silence of the books, which never mention any war at Sennaar till the beginning of the reign of Socinios.

I apprehend, that protecting distinguished persons upon great occasions, alludes to the children of the king of Sennaar, who frequently fly after the death of their father to Abyssinia * for protection, it being the custom of that state to murder all the brothers of the prince that succeeds, instead of sending them to a mountain, as they do in Abyssinia.

The next thing remarkable is his protection of the pilgrims who go to Mecca, and the merchants that go to India. Several caravans of both set out yearly from his kingdom, all Mahometans; some of them go to Mecca for religion, the others to India, by Mocha, to trade. But it is not possible to understand how he is to protect the trade in Persia, with which country he certainly has had no sort of concern these 800 years, nor has it been in that time possible for him either to molest or protect a Persian. What, therefore, I would suppose, is, that the king has made use of the common phrase which universally obtains here, both in writing and conversation, calling Ber el Ajam the West, and Bel el Arab the East coast of the Red Sea. Ber el Ajam, in the language of the country, is the coast where there is water or rain, in opposition to the Tehama, or opposite shore of Arabia, where there is no water. The Greeks and Latins translated this word into their own language, but did not understand it; only from the sound they called it Azamia, from Ajam. Now Ajam, or Ber el Ajam, is the name of Persia also; and the French interpreter says, the king of Abyssinia protects the caravans of Persia; when he should say, the caravans, going through Ber el Ajam, the Azamia of the ancients, to

* Abdel-cader, son of Ounsa, retired here.

embark at the two ports, Suakem and Masuah, both in the country of that name.

The next thing to remark here is, that the king acknowledges Murat to be his ambassador; and it is the arresting of him, which we have seen was done at the instance of M. de Maillet collusively, that the king says was a violation of the law of nations; and it was this insult, done to Murat his ambassador, that he all along complains of, not that offered to Du Roule, which he leaves to the king of France; for he says expressly, if he was to starve, or destroy them all, by stopping the Nile from coming into Egypt, it would be on account of the insult offered to Murat, the envoy, or man, sent on his part to France. It is plain, therefore, that M. de Maillet persecuted the poor Syrian very wrongfully, and that, in no one instance, from first to last, was he ever in the right concerning that embassy.

This step, which justice dictated, was not without its reward; for Tecla Haimanout, who had assembled his army on this account sooner than he otherwise intended, found immediately after, that a rival and rebel prince, Amda Sion, was set up against him by the friends of his father Yasous, and that he had been privately collecting troops, intending to take him by surprise; when he was, however, at the head of his army, ready to give him battle.

The first thing the king did was to dispatch a large body of troops to reinforce Dermin, governor of Gojam; and to him he sent positive orders to force Amda Sion to fight wherever he should find him, while he, with the royal army, came forward with all expedition, to keep the people in awe, and prevent them from joining his rival.

Amda Sion, on the other hand, lost no time. From Ibaba, through Maitsha, he marched straight to Gon-

dar. Being arrived at the king's house at Dingleber, he sat down on the throne with the ensigns of royalty about him, and there appointed several officers that were most needed, in the army, the provinces, and about his person. During his stay here, news were brought that Dermin had followed him, step by step, in the very track he had marched, and laid the whole country waste that had shewed him any countenance or favour. Amda Sion's heart seemed to fail him upon this; for he left Dingleber, crossed the ford at Delakus, and endeavoured to pass Dermin, by keeping on the west side of the Nile, and on the low road by which he returned to Ibaba.

Dermin, well-informed as to his motions, and perfectly instructed in the situation of the country, instead of passing him, turned short upon his front, crossing the Nile at Fagitta, and forced him to an engagement in the plain country at Maitsha. The battle, though it was obstinately fought by the rebels, ended in a complete victory in favour of the king. Those among the rebels who most distinguished themselves were the banished monks, the greatest part of whom were slain fighting desperately. Among these were Abba Welleta Christos, Tobias, and his brother Abba Nicolaus, who had been ringleaders in the late religious disputes in the time of Yasous, and were now chiefs of the rebellion against his son.

The greatest part of the loss fell upon the common men of Gojam, of the clans Elmana and Densa. No man of note among them was lost; only Amda Sion, who fell at their head in the beginning of the engagement, fighting with all the bravery that could be expected from a man in his circumstances. The rebel army was entirely dispersed. On the king's side no man of consideration was slain, but Anaste, son of Ozoro Sabel Wenghel.

After having reinforced Dermin, the first thing the king did was to send three of his brothers, David, Hannes, and Jonathan, to be imprisoned on the mountain of Wechne. He then marched with his army from Gondar; and, being ignorant of what had happened, he dispatched his master of the horse, by way of Dingleber, to join Kasmati Dermin, in case he had not still been strong enough to fight the rebels. With his main army he took the road to Tedda, intending to proceed to Gojam; but, on the way, was informed that Dermin had defeated and slain his rival Amda Sion: and he had scarce crossed the Nile at Dara, when another messenger arrived, with news that Dermin had also come up with Kasmati Honorius and his army on the banks of the Nile, at Goutto, had entirely defeated and slain him, together with his principal officers, and dispersed the whole army. Upon this the king marched towards Ibaba, and was there joined by Dermin, when great rejoicing and feating ensued for several days.

On this occasion the king crowned his mother Malacotawit, conferring upon her the dignity and title of Iteghe; the consequence of which station I have often described. Having now no longer enemies to fear, he was persuaded, by some of his favourites, first to dismiss Dermin and his army, then all the troops that had joined him, and go with a few of his attendants, or court, to hunt the buffalo in the neighbouring country of the Agows, which council the young prince too rashly adopted, suspecting no treason.

While the hunting-match lasted, a conspiracy was formed by Gueber Mo, his two brothers, Palambaras Hannes, and several others, old officers belonging to the late king Yasous, who saw that he intended, one by one, to weed them out of the way as soon as safely he could, and that the whole power and favour was

at last to fall into the hands of the Iteghe, and her brothers Dermin and Paulus. Accordingly, one morning, the conspirators having surrounded him while riding, one of them thrust him through the body with a sword, and threw him from his mule upon the earth. They then laid his body upon a horse, and, with all possible expedition, carried him to the house of Azena Michael, where he arrived yet alive, but died immediately upon being taken from the horse. Badjerund Oustas, and some others of his father's old officers, who had attached themselves to him after his father's death, took the body of the king and buried it in Quebran.

As soon as this assassination was known, the master of the horse, with the few troops that he could gather together, came to the palace, and took a son of Tecla Haimanout, aged only four years, whom he proclaimed king, and the Iteghe, Malacotawit, regent of the kingdom. But Badjerund Oustas, and those who had not been concerned in the murder of either king, went straight to the mountain of Wechne, and brought thence Tifilis, that is, Theophilus, son to Hannes, and brother to the late king Yasous, whom they crowned at Emfras, and called him, by his inauguration name, Atserar Segued.

TIFILIS.

From 1706 to 1709.

Dissembles with his Brother's Assassins—Execution of the Regicides—Rebellion and Death of Tigi.

THEOPHILUS, a few days after his coronation, having called the whole court and clergy together, declared to them, that his faith upon the disputable point concerning our Saviour's incarnation, was different from that of his brother Yasous, or that of his nephew Tecla Haimanout, but in every respect conformable to that of the monks of Gojam, followers of Abba Eustathius, and that of the Iteghe, Malacotawit, Dermin, and Paulus. A violent clamour was instantly raised against the king by the priests of Debra Libanos, as having forsaken the religious principles of his predecessors. But the king was inflexible; and this ingratiated him more with the inhabitants of Gojam. Not many days after, the king arrested the master of the horse, Johannes the Palambaras, the Betwudet Tigi, and several others, all supposed to be concerned in the murder of the late king, and confined them in several places and prisons.

This last action of the king entirely relieved the minds of all the friends of Tecla Haimanout from any further fear of being called to account for the murder of Yasous; and, in consequence of this, the queen

Malacotawit, with her brothers Dermin and Paulus, and all the murderers of the late king Yasous, came to Gondar that same winter, to do homage to Theophilus, whom they now thought their greatest protector.

But the wise and sagacious king had kept his secret in his own bosom. All his behaviour hitherto had been only dissimulation, to induce his brother's murderers to come within his power. And no sooner did he see that he had succeeded in this, than the very first day, while they were yet at audience, he ordered an officer, in his own presence, to arrest first the queen, and then her two brothers, Dermin and Paulus. He gave the same directions concerning the rest of the conspirators, who were all scattered about Gondar, eating, drinking, and fearing nothing, but rejoicing at the happy days they had promised themselves, and were now to see: he ordered the whole of them, amounting to 37 persons, many of these of the first rank, to be all executed that same forenoon.

He began with the queen, who was taken immediately from his presence, and hanged by the common hangman on the tree before the palace gate; the first of her rank, it is believed, that ever died so vile a death, either in Abyssinia or any other country, the history of which has come down to our hands. Dermin and Paulus were first carried to the tree to see their sister's execution; after which, one after another, they were thrust through with swords, the weapon with which they had wounded the late king Yasous. But the two Mahometans were shot with muskets; it having been in that manner they had ended the late king's life, after Dermin had wounded him with a sword. As they had committed high treason, none of the bodies of those traitors were allowed to be buried: they were hewn in small pieces with knives,

and strewed about the streets, to be eaten by the hyænas and dogs; a most barbarous and offensive custom, to which they strictly adhere to this very day.

After having thus taken ample vengeance for the murder of his brother Yasous, Theophilus did not stop here. Tecla Haimanout was, it is true, a parricide, but he was likewise a king, and his nephew; nor did it seem just to Theophilus that it should be left in the will of private subjects, after having acknowledged Tecla Haimanout as their sovereign, to choose a time afterwards, in which they were to cut him off for a crime which, however great, had not hindered them from swearing allegiance to him at his accession, and entering into his service at the time when it was recently committed. He, therefore, ordered all the regicides in custody to be put to death; and sent circular letters to the several governors, that they should observe the same rule as to all those directly concerned in the murder of his nephew Tecla Haimanout, who should be found in places under their command.

Tigi, formerly Betwudet, had been imprisoned in Hamazen, a small district near the Red Sea, under the government of Abba Saluce. This man, by birth a Galla, had escaped from Hamazen, and collected a considerable army of the different tribes of his nation, Liban, Kalkend, and Basso; and having found one that pretended to be of the royal blood, he proclaimed him king, and put his army in motion.

Upon the first news of this revolt, the king, though attended with few troops, immediately left Gondar, ordering all those, whose duty it was, to join him at Ibaba. Having there collected a little army, he marched immediately for the country of the Basso, destroying every thing with fire and sword. Tigi, in the mean time, by forced marches, came to Ibaba,

where he committed all sorts of cruelties, without distinction of age or sex. The cries of the sufferers reached the king, who turned immediately back to the relief of Ibaba; and, not discouraged by his enemy's great superiority of number, offered battle to them as soon as he arrived. Nor did Tigi and his Galla refuse it; but, on the 28th day of March 1709, a very obstinate engagement ensued; where, though the king was inferior in forces, yet being himself warlike and active, he was so well seconded by his troops, that the Basso and Liban were almost entirely cut off.

In the field of battle there was a church, built by the late king Yasous, after a victory gained there over the Galla; whence it had the name it then bore, Debra Mawea, or the *Mountain of Victory*. A large body of these Galla, seeing that all went against them in the field, fled to the church for a sanctuary, trusting to be protected from the fury of the soldiers by the holiness of the place; and they so far judged well; for the king's troops, though they surrounded the church on every side, did not offer to break through, or molest the enemy that had sheltered themselves within. Theophilus, informed of this scruple of his soldiers, immediately rode up to them, crying out, "That the church was defiled by the entrance of so many Pagans, and no longer fit for Christian worship; that they should therefore immediately set fire to it, and he would build a nobler one in its place." The soldiers obeyed without further hesitation; and, with cotton wads wrapt about the balls of their guns, they set fire to the thatch, with which every church in Abyssinia is covered. The whole was instantly consumed, and every creature within it perished. Many principal officers, and men of the best families on the king's side, Billetana Gueta, Sana Denghel, and Billetana Gueta Kirubel, Ayto Stephanos, son of Ozoro

Salla of Nara, all men of great consideration, were slain that day. What became of the rebel prince was never known. Tigi, with his two sons, fled from the field; but they were met by a peasant, who took them prisoners first; and, after discovering who they were, put them all three to death, and brought their heads to the king.

After so violent a rebuke, the Galla, on both sides of the Nile, seemed disposed to be quiet; and the king thereupon returned to Gondar amidst the acclamations of his soldiers and subjects; but scarcely had he arrived in the capital, when he was taken ill of a fever, and died on the 2d of September. He was buried at Tedda, after a reign of three years and three months.

OUSTAS.

From 1709 to 1714.

Usurps the Crown—Addicted to hunting—Account of the Shangalla—Active and bloody Reign—Entertains Catholic Priests privately—Falls sick and dies; but how, uncertain.

It has been already observed, in the course of this history, that the Abyssinians, from a very ancient tradition, attribute the foundation of their monarchy to Menilek son of Solomon, by the queen of Saba, or Azab, rendered in the Vulgate, the queen of the south. The annals of the country mention but two interruptions to have happened in the lineal succession of the heirs-male of Solomon. The first about the year 960, in the reign of Del Naad, by Judith queen of the Falasha; of which revolution we have already spoken sufficiently. The second interruption happened at the period to which we have now arrived in this history; and owed its origin, not to any misfortune that befel the royal family, as in the massacre of Judith, but seemed to be brought about by the peculiar circumstances of the times, from a well-founded attention to self-preservation.

Yasous the Great, after a long and glorious reign, had been murdered by his son Tecla Haimanout.

Two years after, this parricide fell in the same manner. The assassination of two princes, so nearly related, and in so short a time, had involved, from different motives, the greatest part of the noble families of the kingdom, either in the crime itself, or in the suspicion of aiding and abetting it.

Upon the death of Tecla Haimanout, Tifilis, or Theophilus, brother of Yasous, had been brought from the mountain, and placed on the throne as successor to his nephew. This prince was scarcely crowned, when he made some very severe examples of the murderers of his brother; and he seemed to be privately taking informations, that would have reached the whole of them, had not death put an end to his inquiries and to his justice.

The family of king Yasous was very numerous on the mountain. It was the favourite store whence both the soldiery and the citizens chose to bring their princes. There were, at the very instant, many of his sons, princes of great hopes, and of proper ages. Nothing, then, was more probable, than that the prince, now to succeed, would be of that family, and, as such, interested in pursuing the same measures of vengeance on the murderers of his father and of his brother, as the late king Theophilus had done; and how far, or to whom, this might extend, was neither certain nor safe to trust to.

The time was now past when the nobles vied with each other who should be the first to steal away privately, or go with open force, to take the new king from the mountain, and bring him to Gondar, his capital. A backwardness was visible in the behaviour of each of them, because in each one's breast the fear was the same.

In so uncommon a conjuncture, and disposition of men's minds, a subject had the ambition and bold-

ness to offer himself for king; and was accordingly elected. This was Oustas *, son of Delba Yasous, by a daughter of the late king of that name; and Abyssinia now saw, for the second time, a stranger seated on the throne of Solomon. Oustas was a man of undisputed merit, and had filled the greatest offices in the state. He had been Badjerund, or master of the household, to the late king Yasous. Tecla Haimanout, who succeeded, had made him governor of Samen; and though, in the next reign, he had fallen into disgrace with Theophilus, this served but to aggrandize him more, as he was very soon after restored to favour, and, by this very prince, raised to the dignity of Ras, the first place under the king, and invested at once with the government of two provinces, Samen and Tigré. He was, at the death of Theophilus, the greatest subject in Abyssinia; one step higher set him on the throne, and the circumstances of the time invited him to take it. He had every quality of body and mind requisite for a king; but the constitution of his country had made it unlawful for him to reign. He took, upon his inauguration, the name of Tzai Segued.

Oustas, though a new king, following the customs of the ancient monarchs of Abyssinia, for that very reason was unwilling to add novelty to novelty, and it had been a constant practice with these, to make a public hunting-match the first expedition of their reign. On these occasions the king, attended by all the great officers of state, whose merit and capacity are already acknowledged, reviews his young nobility, who all appear to the best advantage as to arms, horses, and equipage, with their greatest number of ser-

* I. signifies Justus.

vants and attendants. The scene of this hunting is always in the Kolla, crowded with an immense number of the largest and fiercest wild beasts, elephants, rhinoceroses, lions, leopards, panthers, and buffaloes fiercer than them all, wild boars, wild asses, and many varieties of the deer kind.

As soon as the game is roused, and forced out of the wood by the footmen and dogs, they all singly, or several together, according to the size of the beast, or as strength and ability in managing their horses admit, attack the animal upon the plain with long pikes or spears, or two javelins in their hands. The king, unless very young, sits on horseback on a rising ground, surrounded by the graver sort, who point out to him the names of those of the nobility that are happy enough to distinguish themselves in his sight. The merit of others is known by report.

Each young man brings before the king's tent, as a trophy, a part of the beast he has slain; the head and skin of a lion or leopard; the scalp or horns of a deer; the private parts of an elephant; the tail of a buffalo, or the horn of a rhinoceros. The great trouble, force, and time necessary to take out the teeth of the elephant, seldom make them ready to be presented with the rest of the spoils; fire, too, is necessary for loosing them from the jaw. The head of a boar is brought stuck upon a lance; but is not touched, as being unclean.

The elephant's teeth are the king's perquisites. Of these round ivory rings are turned for bracelets, and a quantity of them always brought by him to be distributed among the most deserving in the field, and kept ever after as certificates of gallant behaviour. Nor is this mark attended with honour alone. Any man who shall from the king, queen-regent, or governor of a province, receive as many of these rings as shall cover

his arm down to his wrist, appears before the twelve judges on a certain day, and there, laying down his arm with these rings upon it, the king's cook breaks every one in its turn with a kind of kitchen-cleaver, whereupon the judges give him a certificate, which proves that he is entitled to a territory, whose revenue must exceed twenty ounces of gold, and this is never either refused or delayed. All the different species of *game*, however, are not equally rated. He that slays a Galla, or Shangalla, man to man, is entitled to two rings; he that slays an elephant to two; a rhinoceros, two; a giraffa, on account of its speed, and to encourage horsemanship, two; a buffalo, two; a lion, two; a leopard, one; two boars, whose tusks are grown, one; and one for every four of the deer kind.

Great disputes constantly arise about the killing of these beasts; to determine which, and prevent feuds and quarrels, a council sits every evening, in which is an officer, called Dimshasha, or Red Cap, from a piece of red silk he wears upon his forehead, leaving the top of his head bare; for no person is allowed to cover his head entirely except the king, the twelve judges, and dignified priests. This officer regulates the precedence of one nobleman over another, and is possessed of the history of all pedigrees, the noblest of which are always accounted those nearest to the king reigning.

Every man pleads his own cause before the council, and receives immediate sentence. It is a settled rule, that those who strike the animal first, if the lance remain upright, or in the same direction in which it enters the beast, are understood to be the slayers of the beast, whatever number combat with him afterwards. There is one exception, however, that if the beast, after receiving the first wound, though the lance is in him, should lay hold of a horse, or man, so that it is

evident he would prevail against them; a buffalo, for example, that should toss a man with his horns, or an elephant that should take a horse with his trunk, the man, who shall then slay the beast, and prevent, or revenge, the death of the man, or horse, attacked, shall be accounted the slayer of the beast, and entitled to the premium.

This was the ancient employment of these councils. In my time, they kept up this custom in point of form; the council sat late upon the most serious affairs of the nation; and the death, banishment, and degradation of the first men in the kingdom, were agitated and determined here under the pretence of sitting to judge the prizes of pastimes. This hunting is seldom prolonged beyond a fortnight.

The king, from ocular inspection, is presumed to be able to choose among the young nobility those that are ready for taking the necessary charges in the army; and it is from his judgment in this that the priests foretel whether his reign is to be a successful one, or to end in misfortune and disappointment.

Oustas, having taken a view of his nobility, and attached such to him as were most necessary for his support, set out for this hunting with great preparations. The high country of Abyssinia is destitute of wood; the whole lower part of the mountains is sown with different sorts of grain; the upper part perfectly covered with grass and all sorts of verdure; there are no plains, or very small ones. Such a country, therefore, is unfit for hunting, as it is incapable of either sheltering, or nourishing, any number of wild beasts.

The lower country, however, called Kolla, is full of wood, consequently thinly inhabited. The mountains, not joined in chains, or ridges, run in, one upon the other, but standing each upon its particular base,

are accessible all round, and interspersed with plains. Great rivers, falling from the high country with prodigious violence, during the tropical rains, have, in the plains, washed away the soil down to the solid rock, and formed large basons of great capacity, where, though the water becomes stagnant in pools when the currents fail above, yet, from their great depth and quantity, they resist being consumed by evaporation, being also thick covered with large shady trees, whose leaves never fall. These large trees, which, in their growth, and vegetation of their branches, exceed any thing that our imagination can figure, are as necessary for food, as the pools of water are for cisterns to contain drink for those monstrous beasts; such as the elephant and rhinoceros, who there make their constant residence, and who would die with hunger and thirst, unless they were thus copiously supplied both with food and water.

This country, flat as the deserts on which it borders, has fat black earth for its soil. It is generally about forty miles broad, though in many places broader and narrower. It reaches from the mountains of the Habab, or Bagla, which run in a ridge, as I have already said, from the south of Abyssinia * north down into Egypt, parallel to the Red Sea, dividing the rainy seasons; and it stretches like a belt from east to west, to the banks of the Nile, encircling all the mountainous, or high land part of Abyssinia; which latter country is, at all times, temperate, and often cold, while the other is unwholesome, hazy, close, and intolerably hot.

Many nations of perfect blacks inhabit this low country, all Pagans †, and mortal enemies to the Abys-

* Vide general map.

† The perfect blacks are the most antient inhabitants of that part of Africa. They are the true Cushites or Ethiopians.—E.

sinian government. Hunting these miserable wretches is the next expedition undertaken by a new king. The season of this is just before the rains, while the poor savage is yet lodged under the trees preparing his food for the approaching winter, before he retires into his caves in the mountains, where he passes that inclement season in constant confinement, but as constant security; for these nations are all Troglodytes, and, by the Abyssinians, are called Shangalla.

However Oustas succeeded in attaching to him those of the nobility that partook of his sports, his good fortune in the capital was not equal to it. A dangerous conspiracy was already forming at Gondar by those very people who had persuaded him to mount the throne, and whom he had left at home, from a persuasion that they only were to be trusted with the support of his interest and the government in his absence.

Upon the first intelligence, the king, with a chosen body of troops, entered Gondar in the night, and surprised the conspirators while actually sitting in council. Ras Hezekias, his prime minister, and Heraclides, master of his household, and five other of the principal confederates, lost their ears and noses, and were thrown into prison, in such circumstances that they could not live. Benaia Basile, one of the principal traitors, and the most obnoxious to the king, escaped for a time, having had already intelligence of Oustas's coming.

The king, having quieted every thing at Gondar, being at peace with all his neighbours, and having no other way to amuse his troops, and keep them employed, set out to join the remainder of his young nobility, whom he had left in the Kolla, to attack the Shangalla.

The Shangalla were formerly a very numerous people, divided into distinct tribes, or, as it is called,

different nations, living each separately in distinct territories, each under the government of the chief of its own name, and each family of that name under the jurisdiction of its own chief, or head.

These Shangalla *, during the fair half of the year, live under the shade of trees; the lowest branches of which they cut near the stem on the upper part, and then bend, or break them down, planting the ends of the branches in the earth. These branches they cover with the skins of wild beasts. After this they cut away all the small, or superfluous, branches in the inside, and so form a spacious pavilion, which, at a distance, appears like a tent, the tree serving for the pole in the middle of it, and the large top overshadowing it, so as to make a very picturesque appearance.

Every tree then is a house, under which live a multitude of black inhabitants until the tropical rains begin. It is then they hunt the elephant, which they kill by many various devices, as they do the rhinoceros, and the other large animals. Those who reside where water abounds, with the same industry kill the hippopotami, or river horses, which are exceedingly numerous in the pools of the stagnant rivers. Where this flat belt, or country, is broadest, the trees thickest, and the water in the largest pools, there the most powerful nations live, who have often defeated the royal army of Abyssinia, and constantly laid waste, and sometimes nearly conquered, the province of Tigre and Sire, the most warlike and most populous part in Abyssinia.

The most considerable settlement of this nation is at Amba Tzaada, between the Mareb and Tacazze, but nearer, by one third, to the Mareb, and almost N. W. from Dobarwa. These people, who have a

* Written literally in Ethiopic, Shankala: but pronounced Shangalla, with Kaf, as *g* and Lawi doubled.—E.

variety of venison, kill it in the fair months, and hang it up, cut into thongs as thick as a man's thumb, like so many ropes, on the trees around them. The sun dries and hardens it to a consistence almost like leather, or the hardest fish sent from Newfoundland.—This is their provision for the winter months: They first beat it with a wooden mallet, then boil it, after which they roast it upon the embers; and it is hard enough after it has undergone all those operations.

The Dobenah, the most powerful of all the Shangalla, who have a species of supremacy, or command, over all the rest of the nations, live altogether upon the elephant, or rhinoceros. In other countries, where there is less water, fewer trees, and more grass, the Shangalla feed chiefly upon more promiscuous kinds of food, as buffaloes, deer, boars, lions, and serpents. These are the nations nearer the Tacazze, Ras el Feel, and the plains of Sire in Abyssinia, the chief of which is called Baasa. And still farther west of the Tacazze, and the valley of Waldubba, is the tribe of these, who live chiefly upon the crocodile, hippopotamus, and other fish; and, in the summer, upon locusts, which they boil first, and afterwards keep dry in baskets, most curiously made with split branches of trees, so closely woven together as to contain water almost as well as a wooden vessel.

This nation borders nearly upon the Abyssinian hunting-ground; but, not venturing to extend themselves in the chase of wild beasts, they are confined to the neighbourhood of the Tacazze, and rivers falling into it, where they fish in safety. The banks of that river are deep, interrupted by steep precipices inaccessable to cavalry, and, from the thickness of the woods, full of thorny trees of innumerable species, almost as impervious to foot. These streams, possessed

only by themselves, afford the Baasa the most excellent kinds of fish in the most prodigious plenty.

In that part of the Shangalla country more to the eastward, about N. N. E. of Amba Tzaada, in the northern extremities of the woody part, where the river Mareb, leaving Dobarwa, flows through thick bushes till it loses itself in the sands, there is a nation of these blacks, who, being near the country of the Baharnagash, an officer whose province produces a number of horse, dare not, for that reason, venture to make an extensive use of the variety of wild beasts, which throng in the woods to the southward, for fear of being intercepted by their enemy, constantly upon the watch for them, part of his tribute being paid in black slaves. These, therefore, confine themselves to the southern part of their territory, near the Barabra.

The extraordinary course of this river under the sand allures to it multitudes of ostriches, which, too, are the food of the Shangalla, as is a beautiful lizard, never, that I know of, yet described. These are the food of the eastern Shangalla; and, I must here observe, that this country and people were much better known to the ancients than to us. The Egyptians traded with them, and caravans of these people were constantly in Alexandria in the reigns of the first Ptolemies. Most of the productions of these parts, and the people themselves, are mentioned in the remarkable procession made by Ptolemy Philadelphus on his accession to the throne of Egypt, as already observed; though a confusion often arises therein by this country being called by the name of India.

Ptolemy, the geographer, classes these people exactly enough, and distinguishes them very accurately by their particular food, or dietetique regimen, though he errs, indeed, a little in the particular situation he

gives to the different nations. His Rhizophagi Elephantophagi, Acridophagi, Struthiophagi, and Agriophagi, are all the clans I have just described, existing under the same habits to this day.

This soil, called by the Abyssinians, Mazaga, when wet by the tropical rains, and dissolving into mire, forces these savages to seek for winter-quarters. Their tents under the trees being no longer tenable, they retire with their respective foods, all dried in the sun, into caves dug into the heart of the mountains, which are not in this country basaltes, marble, or alabaster, as is all that ridge which runs down into Egypt along the side of the Red Sea, but are of a soft, gritty, sandy stone, easily excavated and formed into different apartments. Into these, made generally in the steepest part of the mountain, do these savages retire to shun the rains, living upon the flesh they have already prepared in the fair weather.

I cannot leave off the account of the Shangalla without delivering them again out of their caves, because this return includes the history of an operation never heard of perhaps in Europe, and by which considerable light is thrown upon ancient history. No sooner does the sun pass the zeinth, going southward, than the rains instantly cease; and the thick canopy of clouds, which had obscured the sky during their continuance, being removed, the sun appears in a beautiful sky of pale blue, dappled with small thin clouds, which soon after disappear, and leave the heavens of a most beautiful azure. A very few days of intense heat then dries the ground so perfectly, that it gapes in chasms; the grass, struck at the roots by the rays, supports itself no more, but droops, and becomes parched. To clear this away, the Shangalla set fire to it, which runs with incredible violence the whole breadth of Africa, passing under the trees, and

following the dry grass among the branches with such velocity as not to hurt the trees, but to occasion every leaf to fall.

A proper distance is preserved between each habitation, and round the principal watering-places; and here the Shangalla again fix their tents in the manner before described. Nothing can be more beautiful than these shady habitations; but they have this fatal effect, that they are discernible from the high grounds, and guide their enemies to the places inhabited.

The country now cleared, the hunting begins, and, with the hunting, the danger of the Shangalla. All the governors, bordering upon the country, from the Baharnagash to the Nile on the west, are obliged to pay a certain number of slaves. Ras el Feel (my government) was alone excepted, for a reason which, had I staid much longer in the country, would probably have been found more advantageous to Abyssinia than all the slaves they procure by the barbarous and prodigal profusion of the blood of these unhappy savages; for, when a settlement of these is surprised, the men are all slaughtered; the women, also, are many of them slain, many throw themselves down precipices, run mad, hang themselves, or starve, obstinately refusing food.

The boys and girls under 17 and 18 years of age, (the younger the better) are taken and educated by the king, and are servants in all the great houses of Abyssinia. They are instructed early in the Christian religion, and the tallest, handsomest, and best inclined, are the only servants that attend the royal person in his palace. The number of the men was 300 that had horses in my time. There was once 280, and, before my time, less than 200. These are all clothed in coats of mail, and mounted on

black horses; always commanded by foreigners, devoted entirely to the king's will. By strict attention to their morals, removing all bad examples from among them, giving premiums to those that read most and best, (for they had all time enough upon their hands, especially in winter) and, above all, by the great delight and pleasure the king used to take in conversing with them while alone, countenancing and rewarding them in the line he knew I followed, this body became, as to firmnes and coolness in action, equal, perhaps, to any of the same number in the world; and the greatest difficulty was keeping them together; for all the great men used to wish one of them for the charge of his door, which is a very great trust among the Abyssinians. The king's easiness was constantly prevailed upon to promise such, and great inconvenience always followed this, till Ras Michael discharged this practice by proclamation, and set the example, by returning four that he himself had kept for the purpose before-mentioned.

While what I have said is still in memory, I must apply a part of it to explain a passage in Hanno's Periplus *. "We saw," says that bold navigator, "when rowing close along the coast of Africa, rivers of fire, which ran down from the highest mountains, and poured themselves into the sea;" this alarmed him so much, that he ordered his gallies to keep a considerable offing.

After the fire has consumed all the dry grass on the plain, and, from it, done the same up to the top of the highest mountain, the large ravines, or gullies, made by the torrents falling from the higher ground, being shaded by their depth, and their being in pos-

* This explanation is just; but it cannot be admitted, that fire kindled by the Shangalla, runs the whole breadth of Africa. —E.

session of the last water that runs, are the latest to take fire, though full of every sort of herbage. The large bamboos, hollow canes, and such like plants, growing as thick as they can stand, retain their greenness, and are not dried enough for burning till the fire has cleared the grass from all the rest of the country. At last, when no other fuel remains, the herdsmen on the top of the mountains set fire to these, and the fire runs down in the very path in which, some months before, the water ran, filling the whole gully with flame, which does not end till it be checked by the ocean below where the torrent of water entered, and where the fuel of course ceases. This I have often seen myself, and been often nearly inclosed in it. and can bear witness, that, at a distance, and by a stranger ignorant of the cause, it would very hardly be distinguished from a river of fire.

The Shangalla go all naked; they have several wives, and these very profilic. They bring forth children with the utmost ease, and never rest or confine themselves after delivery; but washing themselves and the child with cold water, they wrap it up in a soft cloth made of the bark of trees, and hang it upon a branch, that the large ants, with which they are infested, and the serpents, may not devour it. After a few days, when it has gathered strength, the mother carries it in the same cloth upon her back, and gives it suck with her breast, which she throws over her shoulder, this part being of such a length as, in some, to reach almost to their knees.

The Shangalla have but one language, and of a very guttural pronunciation*. They worship various

* A proper specimen of that language would be a valuable aid towards the history of Africa. Are the negroes of the east, the same race as those of the west of Africa? Are the Shangalla the same race as the Donga, or the nations on the Niger?—E.

trees, serpents, the moon, planets, and stars in certain positions, which I never could so perfectly understand as to give any account of them. A star passing near the horns of the moon denotes the coming of an enemy. They have priests, or rather diviners; but it should seem that these were looked upon as servants of the evil being, rather than of the good. They prophecy bad events, and think they can afflict their enemies with sickness, even at a distance. They generally wear copper bracelets upon their wrists and arms.

I have said, the Shangalla have each several wives. This, however, is not owing to any inordinate propensity of the men to this gratification, but to a much nobler cause; which should make European writers, who object this to them, ashamed at the injustice they do the savage, who all his life, quite the reverse of what is supposed, shews an example of continence and chastity, which the purest and most refined European, with all the advantages of education, cannot pretend to imitate.

It is not the men that seek to avail themselves of the liberty they have, by their usages, of marrying as often and as many wives as they please. Hemmed in on every side by active and powerful enemies, who consider them as a species of wild beasts, and hunt them precisely as they do the elephant and rhinoceros; placed in a small territory, where they never are removed above 20 miles from these powerful invaders furnished with horses and fire-arms, to both of which they are strangers; they live for part of the fair season in continual apprehension. The other part of the season, when the Abyssinian armies are all collected and abroad with the king, these unhappy savages are constantly employed in a most laborious hunting of large animals, such as the rhinoceros, the elephant, and giraffa; and afterwards, in the no less laborious pre-

paration of the flesh of these quadrupeds, which is to serve them for food during the six months rains, when each family retires to its separate cave in the mountain, and has no intercourse with any of its neighbours, but leaves the country below immersed in a continual deluge of rain. In none of these circumstances, one should imagine, the savage, full of apprehension and care, could have much desire to multiply a race of such wretched beings as he feels himself to be. It is the wife, not the man, that is the cause of this polygamy; and this is surely a strong presumption against what is commonly said of the violence of their inclinations.

Although the Shangalla live in separate tribes, or nations, yet these nations are again subdivided into families, who are governed by their own head, or chief, and of a number of these the nation is composed, who concur in all that regards the measures of defence and offence against their common enemy the Abyssinian and Arab. Whenever an expedition is undertaken by a nation of Shangalla, either against their enemies, the Arabs on the north, or those who are equally their enemies, the Abyssinians on the south, suppose the nation or tribe to be the Baasa, each family attacks and defends by itself, and theirs is the spoil or plunder who take it.

The mothers, sensible of the disadvantage of a small family, therefore seek to multiply and increase it by the only means in their power; and it is by their importunity that the husband suffers himself to be overcome. A second wife is courted for him by the first, in nearly the same manner as among the Galla.

I will not fear to aver, as far as concerns these Shangalla, or negroes, of Abyssinia (and, I believe, most others of the same complexion, though of different nations), that the various accounts we have of

them are very unfairly stated. To describe them justly, we should see them in their native purity of manners, among their native woods, living on the produce of their own daily labours, without other liquor than that of their own pools and springs, the drinking of which is followed by no intoxication, or other pleasure than that of assuaging thirst. After having been torn from their own country and connections, reduced to the condition of brutes, to labour for a being they never before knew; after lying, stealing, and all the long list of European crimes, have been made, as it were necessary to them, and the delusion occasioned by drinking spirits is found, however short, to be the only remedy that relieves them from reflecting on their present wretched situation, to which, for that reason, they most naturally attach themselves; then, after we have made them monsters, we describe them as such; forgetful that they are now not as their Maker created them, but such as, by teaching them our vices, we have transformed them into, for ends which, I fear, one day will not be found a sufficient excuse for the enormities they have occasioned.

I would not, by any means, have my readers so far mistake what I have now said, as to think it contains either censure upon, or disapprobation of, the slave-trade. I would be understood to mean just the contrary; that the abuses and neglect of manners, so frequent in our plantations, is what the legislature should direct its coercion against, not against the trade in general; which last measure, executed so suddenly, cannot but contain a degree of injustice towards individuals*. It

* This qualified approbation of the slave trade is drawn from a secret opinion that slavery has been practised in all ages; that if suddenly abrogated, the colonists who depend on slaves for con-

is a shame for any government to say, that enormous cruelties towards any set of men are so evident, and have arrived to such excess, without once having been under consideration of the legislature to correct them. It is a greater shame still for that government to say, that these crimes and abuses are now grown to such a height that wholesome severity cannot eradicate them; and it cannot be any thing but an indication of effeminacy and weakness at once to fall to the destruction

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ducting their daily occupations, would be deeply injured; and that government should oblige by laws the possessors of slaves to abstain from cruelty, and to preserve them from vices. It is needless to dispute the antiquity of slavery and of many other gross abuses. It is also true that Europeans hold settlements which they are too proud to labour with their own hands; but retain them by means of their unhappy fellow-creatures reduced to the state of the brutes. Some attention must be due to their situation which has been transmitted to them, rather than chosen by themselves. This argument of expediency, for it is not worthy of the name of justice, has always been allowed to have a reasonable degree of weight in the question.

But if a country cannot breed hands to work its soil, and perform the business of the labouring classes, it ought not to be held by means that degrade those who are forced to resign the rank of men for that purpose, and that offer every temptation to those who alone enjoy an advantage. Such is the imbecility of the best minds when their passions have never known controul, that the judgment is quite dormant, humanity is extinguished, and habit sees cruelty exercised, and even recommended, without a shadow of disapprobation. The greater multitude of men are not naturally good, but of a negative character, weak, ordinary, and unable to surmount passion, interest, habit and prejudice united. Provoked by the vices of their slaves, eager for gain, careless about creatures that they have bought and can sell, creatures that have no country, religion, nor rights;—they are not to be bound by any regulations of government, because their very situation is illegal in its nature, and ought to be abandoned as soon as possible.

This is an important axiom, derived from the cause and effects of slavery: "Let never man be, like the brute of the field, at the arbitrary disposal of man."—E.

of an object of that importance, without having first tried a reformation of those abuses, which alone, in the minds of sober men, can make the trade exceptionable.

The incontinence of these people has been a favourite topic with which blacks have been branded; but, throughout the whole of this history, I have set down only what I have observed, without consulting, or troubling myself with, the systems or authorities of others only so far, as having these relations in my recollection, I have compared them with the fact, and found them erroneous. As late as two centuries ago, Christian priests were the only historians of heathen manners.

In the number of these Shangalla, or negroes, of which every department of Gondar was full, I never saw any proof of unbridled desires in either sex, but very much the contrary; and I must remark, that every reason in physics strongly militates against the presumption.

The Shangalla of both sexes, while single, go entirely naked: the married men, indeed, have a very slender covering about their waist, and married women the same. Young men and young women, till long past the age of puberty, are totally uncovered, and in constant conversation and habits with each other, in woods and solitudes, free from constraint, and without any punishment annexed to the transgression. Yet criminal commerce is much less frequent among them than in the same number chosen among Christian nations, where the powerful prejudices of education give great advantage to one sex in subduing their passions, and where the consequences of gratification, which always involve some kind of punishment, keep within bounds the desires of the other.

No one can doubt but that the constant habit of seeing people of all ages naked at all times in the ordinary transactions and necessities of life, must greatly check unchaste propensities. But there are still further reasons why, in the nature of things, an extraordinary vehemence of passion should not fall to be a distinguishing characteristic among the Shangalla. Fahrenheit's thermometer rises there beyond 100°. A violent relaxation, from profuse perspiration, must greatly debilitate the savage. In Arabia and Turkey, where the whole business of man's life is devoting himself to domestic pleasure, men remain constantly in a sedentary life, eat heartily, avoiding every manner of exercise or expence of animal spirits by sweats. Their countries, too, are colder than that of the Shangalla, who, living sparingly under a burning sun, and obliged to procure food by laborious hunting, of consequence deprive themselves of that quantity of animal spirits necessary to lead them to any extreme of voluptuousness. And that this is the case is seen in the constitution of the Shangalla women, even though they are without fatigue.

A woman, upon bearing a child or two, at 10 or 11 years old, sees her breast fall immediately down to near her knees *. Her common manner of suckling her children is by carrying them upon her back, as our beggars do, and giving the infant the breast over her shoulders. They rarely are mothers after 22, or begin child-bearing before they are 10; so that the time of child-bearing is but 12 years. In Europe, very many examples there are of women bearing children at 14; the civil law fixes puberty at 12, but by an innuendo† seems to allow it may be

* Juvenal. Sat. 13. l. 163.

† Nisi militia suppleat ætatem.

something earlier. Women sometimes in Europe bear children at 50. The scale of years of child-bearing between the savage and the European is, therefore, as 12 is to 38. There can be little doubt but their desires are equal to their strength and constitution; but a Shangalla at 22 is more wrinkled and deformed, apparently by old age, than is a European woman of 60.

To come still nearer; it is a fact known to naturalists, and which the application of the thermometer sufficiently indicates, that there is a great and sensible difference in the degree of animal heat in both sexes of different nations at the same ages or time of life. The voluptuous Turk estranges himself from the fairest and finest of his Circassian and Georgian women in his seraglio, and, during the warm months in summer, addicts himself only to negro slaves brought from the very latitudes we are now speaking of; the sensible difference of the coolness of their skins leading him to give them the preference at that season. On the other hand, one brown Abyssinian girl, a companion for the winter months, is sold at ten times the price of the fairest Georgian or Circassian beauty, for opposite reasons.

The very great regard I shall constantly pay my fair readers has made me, as they may perceive, enter as tenderly as possible into these discussions, which, as a philosopher and a historian, I could not, however, wholly omit. The most useful study of mankind is man; and not the least interesting view of him is, when, stripped of his vain glory and the pageantry of palaces, he wanders naked and uncorrupted among his native woods and rivers.

I must mention, greatly to the credit of two of the first geniuses of the age, M. de Buffon and Lord Kaimes, that they were both so convinced by the ar-

guments above mentioned, stated in greater detail and with more freedom, that they immediately ordered their bookseller to strike out from the subsequent editions of their works all that had been advanced against the negroes on this head, which they had before drawn from the herd of prejudiced and ignorant compilers, strangers to the manners and language of the people they were dishonouring by their descriptions, after having before abused them by their tyranny.

The Shangalla have no bread; no grain or pulse will grow in the country. Some of the Arabs, settled at Ras el Feel, have attempted to make bread of the seed of the Guinea grass; but it is very tasteless and bad, of the colour of cow-dung, and quickly producing worms.

They are all archers from their infancy. Their bows are all made of wild fennel, thicker than the common proportion, and about seven feet long, and very elastic. The children use the same bow in their infancy that they do when grown up; and are, by reason of its length, for the first years, obliged to hold it parallel, instead of perpendicular, to the horizon. Their arrows are full a yard and a half long, with large heads of very bad iron rudely shaped. They are, indeed, the only savages I ever knew that take no pains in the make or ornament of this weapon. A branch of a palm, stript from the tree and made straight, becomes an arrow; and none of them have wings to them. They have this remarkable custom, which is a religious one, that they fix upon their bows a ring, or thong, of the skin of every beast slain by it, while it is yet raw, from the lizard and serpent up to the elephant. This gradually stiffens the bow, till, being all covered over, it can be no longer bent even by its master. That bow is then hung upon a tree,

and a new one is made in its place, till the same circumstance again happens; and one of these bows, that which its master liked best, is buried with him, in the hopes of its rising again materially with his body, when he shall be endowed with a greater degree of strength, without fear of death, or being subjected to pain, with a capacity to enjoy, in excess, every human pleasure. There is nothing, however, spiritual in this resurrection, nor what concerns the soul, but it is wholly corporeal and material; although some writers have plumed themselves upon their fancied discovery of what they call the savage's belief of the immortality of the soul.

Before I take leave of this subject, I must again explain, from what I have already said, a difficult passage in classical history. Herodotus * says, that, in the country we have been just now describing, there was a nation called Macrobii; which was certainly not the real name of the Shangalla, but one the Greeks had given them, from a supposed circumstance of their being remarkable long livers, as that name imports. These were the western Shangalla, situated below Guba and Nuba, the gold country, on both sides of the Nile, north of Fazuclo.

The Guba and the Nuba, and various black nations that inhabit the foot of that large chain of mountains called Dyre and Tegla †, are those in whose countries the finest gold is found, which is washed from the mountains in the time of violent rains, and lodged in holes, and roots of trees and grass, by the torrents and there picked up by the natives; it is called Tibbar, or, corruptly, gold-dust. The greatest part finds

* Herod. lib. 3. par. 17. et seq.

† Supposed to be the Garamantica Vallis of Ptolemy.

its way to Sennaar by the different merchants, Pagan and Mahometan, from Fazuclo and Sudân. The Agows and Gibbertis also bring a small quantity of it to Gondar, mostly debased by alloy; but there is no gold in Abyssinia, nor even in Nubia, west of Tchelga, among the Shangalla themselves.

Cambyses marched from Egypt expressly with a view of conquering the gold country; and sent messengers before him to the king, or chief of it, requiring his immediate submission. I omit romantic and fabulous circumstances; but the answer of the king of the Macrobii to Cambyses was, "Take this bow, and till you can bring me a man that can bend it, you are not to talk to us of submission." The bow was accordingly carried back with the defiance, but none of the Persian army could bend it. Yet it was their own weapon with which they practised from their infancy; and we are not to think, had it been possible to bend this bow, but that some of their numerous archers would have done it; for there is no such disproportion in the strength of men. But it was a bow which had lost its elastic force from the circumstance above mentioned, and had been long given up as impossible to be bent by the Macrobii themselves; and was now taken down from the tree, where it had probably some time hung, and grown so much the less flexible; and intended to be buried, as these bows are, in the grave with their master, who is to use it, after his resurrection, in another world, where he is to be endowed with strength infinitely more than human: it is probable this bow would have broke, rather than have bent.

If the situation of these Macrobii in Ptolemy did not put it past dispute that they were Shangalla, we should hesitate much at the characteristic of the nation, that they were long livers. None of these na-

tions are so; I scarcely remember an example fairly vouched of a man past sixty. But there is one circumstance that I think might have fairly led Herodotus into this mistake; some of the Shangalla kill their sick, weak, and aged people; there are others that honour old age, and protect it. The Macrobii, I suppose, were of this last kind, who certainly, therefore, had many old men, more than the others.

I shall now just mention one other observation tending to illustrate a passage of ancient history.

Hanno, in his Periplus, remarks, that, while sailing along the coast of Africa, close by the shore, and probably near the low country called Kolla, inhabited by the kind of people we have been just describing, he found an universal silence to prevail the whole day, without any appearance of man or beast: on the contrary, at night, he saw a number of fires, and heard the sound of music and dancing. This had been laughed at as a fairy tale by people who affect to treat Hanno's fragment as spurious; for my own part, I will not enter into the controversy.

A very great genius (in some matters, perhaps, the greatest that ever wrote, and in every thing that he writes highly respectable), M. de Montesquieu, is perfectly satisfied that this Periplus * of Hanno is genuine; and it is a great pleasure again to endeavour to obviate any doubt concerning the authenticity of the work in this second passage, as I have before done in another.

In countries, such as those that we have been now describing, and such as Hanno was then sailing by when he made the remark, there is no twilight. The

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* Dodwell's Dissertation of Hanno's Periplus.—Montesquieu. tom. I. lib. 21. cap. 11.

stars, in their full brightness, are in possession of the whole heavens, when in an instant the sun appears without a harbinger, and they all disappear together. We shall say, at sun-rising, the thermometer is from 48°·to 60°; at three o'clock in the afternoon it is from 100° to 115°; an universal relaxation, a kind of irresistible languor and aversion to all action, takes possession of both man and beast; the appetite fails, and sleep and quiet are the only things the mind is capable of desiring, or the body of enduring: cattle, birds, and beasts, all flock to the shade, and to the neighbourhood of running streams, or deep stagnant pools; and there, avoiding the effects of the scorching sun, pant in quiet and inaction. From the same motive, the wild beast stirs not from his cave; and for this, too, he has an additional reason, because the cattle he depends upon for his prey do not stroll abroad to feed; they are asleep and in safety, for with them are their dogs and their shepherds.

But no sooner does the sun-set, than a cold night instantly succeeds a burning day; the appetite immediately returns; the cattle spread themselves abroad to feed, and pass quickly out of the shepherds' sight into the reach of a multitude of beasts seeking for their prey. Fires, the only remedy, are everywhere lighted by the shepherds to keep these at a respectful distance; and dancing, singing, and music, at once exhilarate the mind, and contribute, by alarming the beasts of prey, to keep their flocks in safety, and prevent the bad effects of severe cold*. This was the cause of the observation Hanno made in sailing along

* This sensation of the savage in the heart of Africa, seems to be unknown to the enemies of the slave-trade; they talk much of heat, without knowing the material suffering of the negro is from cold.

the coast; and it was true when he made it. Just the same may be observed still, and will be, as long as the climate and inhabitants are the same.

I have been more particular in the history of this extraordinary nation; because I had, by mere accident, an opportunity of informing myself fully, and with certainty, concerning it; and, as it is very improbable that such an opportunity will occur again to any European, I hope it will not be ungratefully received.

I shall only add an answer to a very obvious question which may occur. Why is it that, in this country, nothing that would make bread will grow? Is it from the ignorance of the inhabitants in not choosing the proper seasons? or, Is it the imperfection of the soil? To this I answer, Certainly the latter. For the inhabitants of Ras el Feel were used to plow and sow, and did constantly eat bread; but the grain was produced ten or fifteen miles off upon the sides of the mountains of Abyssinia, where every certain number of soldiers had small farms allowed them for that purpose by government; but still they could never bring up a crop in the Mazaga. And the progress of the miscarriage was this: Before the month of May all that black earth was rent into great chasms, trod into dust, and ventilated with hot winds, so as to be a perfect *caput mortuum*, incapable of any vegetation. Upon the first sprinkling of rain, the chasms are filled up, and the whole country resembles dry garden-mould newly dug up. As the sun advances, the rains increase; there is no time to be lost now; this is the season for sowing; let us suppose wheat. In one night's time, while the wheat is swelling in the ground, up grows an immense quantity of indigenous natural grass, that, having sowed itself last year, has lain ever since in a natural matrix, ready to start at the most

convenient season. Before the wheat, or any grain soever, can appear, this grass has shot up so high, and so thick, as absolutely to choke it. Suppose it was possible to hoe or weed it, the grass will again overtop the grain before it is an inch from the ground. Say it could be again hoed or cleared, by this time the rains are so continual, the black earth becomes a perfect mire. The rain increases, and the grain rots without producing any crop.

The same happens to millet, or Indian corn; the rain rots the plant which is thrown down by the wind. It is equally destroyed if sown at the end of the rains; the grass grows up, wherever the ground is cleared, in a greater proportion, if possible, than in the beginning of the year; and the rain ceasing abruptly, and the sun beginning to be intensely hot the very day it passes the zenith, the earth is reduced to an impalpable powder; whilst the grain and plant die without ever shewing a tendency to germinate.

We left the king, Oustas, after detecting a conspiracy, ready to fall upon some settlement of Shangalla. This he executed with great success, and surrounded a large part of the nation called Baasa encamped under the trees, suspecting no danger. He put the grown people to the sword, and took a prodigious number of children, of both sexes, captive. He was intending also to push his conquest farther among these savages, when he was called to Gondar by the death of his prime minister and confident, Ras Fasa Christos.

Besides his attention to hunting and government, the king had a very great taste for architecture, which, in Abyssinia, is a very popular one, though scarcely any thing is built but churches. In the season that did not permit him to be in the field, he bestowed a great deal of leisure and money this way; and he was, at this time, busy erecting a magnificent church to the

Nativity, about a mile below Gondar, on the small river Kahha.

But the season of hunting returning before he had finished it, he left it to repair to Bet Malo, a place in the Kolla, where he had built a hunting-seat, not far distant from the Shangalla, called Baasa. Here he had a most successful hunting-match of the buffalo, rhinoceros, and elephant, in which he often put himself in great dangor, and distinguished himself in dexterity and horsemanship greatly above any of his court. He returned upon news, that persons, whom he had secretly employed, had apprehended Betwudet Basile, and his son Claudius, who had escaped when the last conspirators were seized. Both these he sentenced immediately to lose their eyes.

These hunting-matches, so punctually observed, and so eagerly followed by a man already past the flower of his youth, had, in their first appearance, nothing but sound policy. The king's title was avowedly a faulty one; and the many conspiracies that had been formed, had shewn him the nobility were not all of them disposed to bear his yoke; nothing, then, was more political than to keep a considerable number of them employed in field-exercises, to be informed of their inclinations, and to attach them to his person by favours. At the head of this little, but very active army, he was ready in a moment to fall upon the disaffected, before they could collect strength sufficient for resistance. Time, however, shewed this was not entirely the reason of these continual intervals of absence for so long a time in the Kolla.

Notwithstanding the misfortune that had befallen the French ambassador, M. du Roule, at Sennaar, in the reign of Yasous I. and Tecla Haimanout his son, under Baady el 'Ahmer, there had still remained below, in Atbara, some of those missionaries who had

courage and address enough to attempt the journey into Abyssinia; and they succeeded in it. Oustas had probably been privy to their arrival in Yasous's time, and had, equally with him, a favourable opinion of the Romish religion.

These missionaries, though Yasous was now dead, were perfectly well received by Oustas; he had given them in charge to Ain Egzie, an old and loyal servant of Yasous, and governor of Walkayt. He had placed also with them an Abyssinian priest, who had been at Jerusalem, and was well-affected to the Romish faith, to be their interpreter, stay with them always, and manage their interests; while he himself, stealing frequently from the hunting-matches, heard mass, and received the communion, returning back to his camp, as he flattered himself, unperceived. These meetings with the priests were not, however, so well concealed, but that they came to the knowledge of many people about court, both seculars and clergy. But the king's character, for severity and vigilance, made every body confine their thoughts, whatever they were, within their own breasts.

The employment of this year was a short journey to Ibaba, a large market-town, where there is a royal residence, below Maitsha, on the west, or Gojam side of the Nile, from which it is about three days distance. From this he returned again, and went to Tcherkin, a small village in the Kolla, beyond Ras el Feel, in the way to Sennaar, the principal abode of the elephant. But, in the first day's hunting, Yared, master of his household, and a considerable favourite, being torn to pieces by one of these quadrupeds, he gave over the sport, and returned very sorrowful to bury him at Gondar, leaving three of his servants to execute a design he had formed against the Baasa in that neighbourhood.

From the constant interruptions Oustas had met

with in all these hunting-matches, and his success, notwithstanding, whenever he had himself attended, the divining monks had prophesied his reign was to be short, and attended with much bloodshed; nor were they for once distant from the truth; for, in the month of January 1714, while he was overlooking the workmen building the church of Abba Antonius at Gondar, he was taken suddenly ill; and, suspecting some unwholesomeness or witchcraft in his palace, he ordered his tent to be pitched without the town, till the apartments should be smoked with gunpowder. But this was done so carelessly by his servants, that his house was burnt to the ground; which was looked upon as a very bad omen, and made a great impression upon the minds of the people.

The 27th of January, it was generally understood that the king was dangerously ill, and that his complaint was every day increasing. Upon this, the principal officers went, according to their usual custom, to condole with, and comfort him. This was, at least, what they pretended. Their true errand, however, was pretty well known, to be an endeavour to ascertain whether the sickness was of that kind likely to continue, till measures could be adopted, with a degree of certainty, to take the reins of government out of his hand.

The king easily divined the reason of their coming. Having had a good night, he used the strength that he had thereby acquired, to rouse himself for a moment, to put on the appearance of health, and shew himself, as usual, engaged in his ordinary dispatch of business. The seeming good countenance of the king made their condolance premature. Some excuse, however, for so formal a visit, was necessary; but every apology was not safe. They adopted this, which they thought unexceptionable, that hearing he was

sick, which they happily found he was not, they came to propose to him a thing equally proper whether he was sick or well; that he would, in time, settle the succession upon his son Fasil, then in the mountain of Wechne, as a means of quieting the minds of his friends, preventing bloodshed, and securing the crown to his family.

Oustas did the utmost to command himself upon this occasion, and to give them an answer such as suited a man in health, who hoped to live many years. But it was now too late to play such a part; and, in spite of his utmost dissimulation, evident signs of decay appeared upon him, which his visitors conjectured would soon be past dissembling. and they agreed to stay with the king till the evening.

But the soldiers on guard, who heard the proposal of sending for Oustas's son, and who really believed that these men spoke from their heart, and were in earnest, were violently discontented and angry at this proposal. They began to be weary of novelty, and longed for a king of the ancient royal family. As soon, therefore, as it was dark, they entered Gondar, and called together the several regiments, or bodies of soldiers, which composed the king's household. Having come to a resolution how they were to act, they returned to their quarters where they were upon guard; and meeting the great officers coming out of Oustas's tent, where they, too, had probably agreed upon the same measure, though it was not known, the soldiers drew their swords, and slew them all, being seven in number. Among these were Betwudet Tamerte, and the Acab Saat; the one the principal lay-officer, the other the chief ecclesiastic in the king's house.

This massacre seemed to be the signal for a general insurrection; in the course of which, part of the town

was set on fire. But the soldiers, at their first meeting in the palace *, had shut up the coronation chamber, and the other royal apartments, and possessed themselves of the kettle-drum, by which all proclamations were made at the gate, driving away, and rudely treating the multitude on every side. At last they brought out the drum, though it was yet night, and made this proclamation: "David, son of our late king Yasous, is our king." The tumult and disorder, nevertheless, still continued; during all which, it was very remarkable, no one ever thought of offering an injury to Oustas.

While these things were passing at Gondar, a violent alarm had seized all the princes upon the mountain of Wechne. They had been treated with severity during Oustas's whole reign. Their revenues had been with-held, or at least not regularly paid, and they had been reduced nearly to perish for want of the necessaries of life. When, therefore, the accounts of Oustas's illness arrived, and that the principal

* There seems here some contradiction, which needs explanation. It is said, that the palace was burnt before Oustas went to his tent. How, then, could the soldiers assemble in it afterwards? The palace consists of a number of separate houses at no great distance, but detached from one another, with one room in each. That where the coronation is performed is called Anbasa Bet; another, where the king sits in festivals, is called Zeffan Bet; another is called Werk Sacala, the gold house; another, Gimja Bet, or the Brocade-house, where the wardrobe and the gold stuffs used for presents, or received as such, are laid. Now, we suppose Oustas in any one of these apartments, say Zeffan Bet, which he left to go to his tent, and it was then burnt; still there remained the coronation house, where the regalia was kept, which the soldiers locked up, that it might not be used to crown Fasil, Oustas's son, whom they thought the seven great men they had murdered conspired to place on the throne after his father.

people had proposed to name Fasil his son, then their fellow prisoner, to succeed him, their fears no longer reminded them of the hardships of his father's reign, as they expected utter extirpation as the only measure by which he could provide for his own security. Full of these fears, they agreed, with one consent, to let down from the mountain fifty princes of the greatest hopes, all in the prime of life, and therefore most capable of defending their own right, and securing the lives of those that remained upon the mountain, from the cruel treatment they must obviously expect if they fell into the hand of an usurper or stranger.

The brother of Betwudet Tamerte, who, with the six others, had been murdered before Oustas's tent, was, at that time, guardian of the mountain of Wechne. His brother's death, however, and the unsettled state of government, had so much weakened both his authority and attention, that he either did not choose, or was not able, to prevent the escape of these princes, all flying for their lives, and for the sake of preserving the ancient constitution of their country. And that this, and no other, was their object, appeared the instant the danger was removed; for, as soon as the news, that David was proclaimed at Gondar, arrived at the mountain, all the princes returned of their own accord, excepting Bacuffa, younger brother to the king, who fled to the Galla, and lay concealed among them for a time.

On David's arrival at Gondar, all the old misfortunes seemed to be forgotten. The joy of having the ancient royal line restored, prevailed over those fears which first occasioned the interruption. The prisons were thrown open, and David was crowned the 30th of January 1714, amidst the acclamations of all ranks of people, and every demonstration of festivity and joy.

David was the son of Yasous the Great, by his favourite Ozoro Keduste; and, consequently, half-brother to the parricide Tecla Haimanout. At his coronation he was just twenty-one years of age, and took for his inauguration name Adebar Segued.

In all this time, however, Oustas was alive. Oustas was indeed sick, but still he was king; and yet it is surprising, that David had been now nine days at Gondar, and no injury had been offered to Oustas, nor any escape attempted for him by his friends.

It was the 6th of February, the day before Lent, when the king sent the Abuna Marcus, Itchegue Za Michael, with some of the great officers of state, to interrogate Oustas judicially, for form's sake, as to his title to the crown. The questions proposed were very short and simple—"Who are you? What brought you here?" To these plain interrogatories, Oustas, struggling with death, answered as plainly, and without equivocation, "Tell my king David, that true it is I have made myself king, as much as one can be that is not of the royal family; for I am but a private man, son of a subject, Kasmati Delba Yasous: all I beg of the king is to give me a little time, and let me die with sickness, without putting me to torment or pain."

On the 10th day of February, that is, four days after the interrogation, Oustas died; but whether of a violent or natural death is not known. The historian of his reign, a contemporary writer, says, some reported that he died of an amputation of his leg, by order of the king; others, that he was strangled; but that most people were of opinion that he died of sickness: And this I think the most probable; for had the king been earnestly set upon his death, he would not have allowed so much time to pass, after his coronation, before his rival was interrogated; nor was

there any reason to allow him four days after his confession. David's moderation after his death, moreover, seems to render this still more credible; for he ordered his body to be buried in the church of the Nativity, which he had himself built, with all the honours and public ceremonies due to his rank as a nobleman and subject, who had been guilty of no crime; instead of ordering his body to be hewn in pieces, and scattered along the ground without burial, to be eaten by the dogs; the invariable punishment, unless in this one instance, of high treason in this country.

Posterity, regarding his merit more than his title, has, however, still retained his name in the list of kings; and tradition, doing him more justice than history, has ranked him among the best that ever reigned in Abyssinia.

DAVID IV.

From 1714 to 1719.

Convocation of the Clergy—Catholic priests executed—A second Convocation—Clergy insult the King—His severe Punishment—King dies of Poison.

THE moderation of the king, before and after the death of Oustas, and perhaps some favourable appearances now unknown to us, set the monks, constant pryers into futurity, upon prophecying that the reign of this prince would be equal in length to that of his father, Yasous the Great, peaceable, full of justice and moderation, without execution, or effusion of civil blood.

David, immediately upon his accession, appointed Fit-Auraris Agne, Ozoro Keduste's brother *, his Betwudet, and Abra Hezekias his master of the household; and was proceeding to fill up the inferior posts of government, when he was interrupted by the clamours of a multitude of monks, demanding a convocation of the clergy.

These assemblies, however often solicited, are never called in the reign of vigorous princes, but by the

* Mistress to Yasous, and mother to David.

special order of the sovereign, who grants or refuses them purely from his own free-will. They are, however, particularly expected at the accession of a new prince, upon any apprehension of heresy, or any novelty or abuse in church government.

The arrival of a new Abuna from Egypt is also a very principal reason for the convocation. These assemblies are very numerous. Many of the most discreet members of the church absent themselves purposely. On the other hand, the monks, who, by vows, have bound themselves to the most painful austerities and sufferings, who devote themselves to pass their lives in the deep and unwholesome vallies of the country; hermits, that starve on the points of cold rocks; others, that live in deserts, surrounded with, and perpetually exposed to, wild beasts; in a word, the whole tribe of fanatics, false prophets, diviners, and dreamers, people who affect to see and foreknow what is in future to happen, by living in perfect ignorance of what is passing at the present; people in constant habits of dirt and nastiness, naked, or covered with hair; in short, a collection of monsters, scarcely to be described or conceived, compose an ecclesiastical assembly in Abyssinia, and lead an ignorant and furious populace, who adore them as saints, and are always ready to support them in some violation of the laws of the country, or of humanity, to which, by their customs and manner of life, their very appearance shews they have long been strangers.

David, however averse to these assemblies, could not decently refuse them, being a prince newly set on the throne; a new Abuna was come from Egypt; and a complaint was ready to be brought, that the church was in danger. The assembly met in the usual place before the palace. The Itchegue, or head of the monks of Debra Libanos, was ready with a complaint,

which he preferred to the king. He stated it to be notorious, and offered to prove it if denied, that three Romish priests, with an Abyssinian for their interpreter, were then established in Walkayt; and, for several years, had been there maintained, protected, and consulted by the late king Oustas, who had often assisted at the celebration of mass according to the church of Rome.

David was a rigid adherent to the church of Alexandria, and educated by his mother in the tenets of the monks of Saint Eustathius; the most declared enemies of every thing approaching to the tenets of the church of Rome. He was, consequently, not inclined or obliged to undertake the defence of measures adopted by Oustas, of which he was besides ignorant, having been confined in the mountain of Wechne. He ordered, therefore, the missionaries, and their interpreter, whose name was Abba Gregorius, to be apprehended.

These unfortunate people were accordingly produced before the most prejudiced and partial of all tribunals. Abba Massmare and Adug Tesfo were adduced, to interrogate and to interpret to them, as they understood the Arabic, having been at Cairo and Jerusalem. The trial was neither long, nor was intended to be so. The first question put was a very direct one—Do you, or do you not, receive the council of Chalcedon as a rule of faith? and, Do you believe that Leo the pope lawfully and regularly presided at it, and conducted it? To this the prisoners plainly answered, That they looked upon the council of Chalcedon as the fourth general council, and received it as such, and as the rule of faith: that they did believe pope Leo lawfully and regularly presided as it, as being head of the Catholic church, successor to St Peter, and Christ's vicar upon earth. Upon this a general shout was heard from the whole assembly; and the

fatal cry, "Stone them."—"Whoever throws not three stones, he is accursed, and an enemy to Mary," immediately followed.

One priest only, distinguished for piety and learning among his countrymen, and one of the chief men in the assembly, with great vehemence declared, that they were tried partially and unfairly, and condemned unjustly. But his voice was not heard amidst the clamours of such a multitude; and the monks were accordingly condemned by the judges to die. Ropes were instantly thrown about their necks, and they were dragged to a place behind the church of Abbo, in the way to Tedda, where they were, according to their sentence, stoned to death, suffering with a patience and resignation equal to the first martyrs.

The justice, however, which we owe to the memory of M. du Roulé, must always leave a fear in every Christian mind, that, spotted as these missionaries were with the horrid crime of the premeditated, unprovoked murder of that ambassador, the indifference they testified at the approach, and in the immediate suffering of death, had its origin rather in hardness of heart than in quiteness of conscience. Many fanatics have been known to die, glorying in having perpetrated the most horrid crimes, to which the sentence of eternal damnation is certainly annexed in the book before them.

I have often, both on purpose and by accident, passed by this place, where three large, and one small, pile of stones, cover the bodies of these unfortunate sufferers; and, with many heavy reflections upon my own danger, often wondered how these three priests, of whatever nation they were, passed unnoticed among the number of their fraternity, whose memory is honoured with long panegyrics by the Romish writers of those times as destined one day to appear in the kalendar. Though those that compose the long list of Tel-

lez died with piety and resignation, they were surely guilty in the way they almost all were engaged, contrary to the laws and constitution of the country, in actions and designs that can be fairly qualified by no other name than that of treason, while no such political meddling out of their profession ever was attached to these three, even by their enemies.

Tellez says not a word of them *; Le Grande, a zealous Catholic writer of these times, but little; though he published an Arabic letter to consul Mallet, which mentions their names, their sufferings, and other circumstances attending them. I shall, therefore take the liberty of offering my conjecture; as I think this silence, or the suppression of a fact, gives me a title to do; but shall first produce the letter of Elias Enoch, upon which I found my judgment.

Translation of an Arabic Letter, wrote to M. de Maillet.

" After having assured M. de Maillet, the consul, of my respects, and of the continuation of my prayers for his health, as being a gentleman venerable for his merits, distinguished by his knowledge and great penetration, of a noble birth, always beneficent, and addicted to pious actions (may God preserve his life to that degree of honour due to so respectable a person), I now write you from the town of Mocha. I left Abyssinia in the year 1718, and came to this town of Mocha in extreme poverty, or rather absolutely destitute. God has assisted me: I give praise to him for his bounty, and always remain much obliged to you.

* The work of Tellez was published in 1660; the death of these men happened more than 70 years after.—E.

What follows is all that I can inform you as touching the news of Abyssinia. King Yasous is long since dead: his son, Tecla Haimanout, having seized upon the kingdom by force, caused his father to be assassinated. This king Yasous, having given me leave to go to Sennaar, furnished me with a letter addressed to the king there, in which he desired him to put no obstacles in the way of du Roule, the French ambassador's journey, but to suffer him to enter Ethiopia. He also gave me another letter addressed to the basha and officers of Grand Cairo; and another letter to the ambassador himself, by which he signified to him that he might enter into Ethiopia without fear. Accordingly I had departed with these letters for Sennaar; but, king Tecla Haimanout, son of king Yasous, have taken possession of the kingdom while I was yet in Abyssinia, I returned and delivered to him the letters which had been given me by his father. It was now three months since Tecla Haimanout had been upon the throne; he approved of the letters, and caused them to be transcribed in his own name; and ordered me to go and join du Roule, the ambassador, and accompany him back again to Gondar. King Yasous had already sent an officer to meet the ambassador at Sennaar; and he had been gone six months without my knowledge; but that officer, having trifled away his time in trading, did not enter Sennaar till that king had caused the ambassador to be murdered, together with those that were with him. As for me, not knowing what had happened, I was advancing with the orders of Tecla Haimanout, when, being now within three days journey of Sennaar, I heard of the ambassador's death, and that of his companions; and being terrified at this, I returned into Abyssinia to let Tecla Haimanout know what the king of Sennaar had done. Immediately upon hearing of this, Tecla Haimanout formed a resolution to

declare war against the king of Sennaar, but was soon after slain in a mutiny of the soldiers. He reigned two years. Tifilis, brother of Yasous, succeeded him, and reigned three years and three months. Oustas, nephew of king Yasous, succeeded Tifilis, and usurped the kingdom, of which he was actually prime minister, being son of a sister of Yasous. Oustas was dethroned, and died soon after. David, son of Yasous, succeeded him, and reigned five years and five months. The friars, who arrived in Ethiopia in the reign of Oustas, were stoned to death, upon the succession of David to the throne, by those that were of the party of David. A son of Michael, whom he had by a slave, aged only six years, was stoned with him. It was the fourth son he had. I made Yasous believe that the religion of the French was the same with that of Ethiopia," &c.

From this letter, we see a boy of six years old, son of one of these priests, or friars, was stoned to death with them; and his heap of stones appears with those of the others. It was, indeed, a common test of the people suspected to be priests, who stole into Abyssinia, to offer them women; their vows being known, and that they could not marry. I apprehend, to avoid detection, one at least of them had broken his vow of celibacy and chastity, and that this child was the consequence, but not the only one, as Enoch says, in his letter, he had three others; and this probably was the reason why the Catholics of those times had consigned their merit to oblivion, rather than record it with their failings.

For, although we know that there were friars, who had been in Ethiopia since the time of Oustas, we should not have been informed who they were, had it not been for a small sheet, published at Rome in the year 1774, by a capuchin priest, called Theodosius

Volpi, sent to me by my learned and worthy friend, the honourable Daines Barrington. From this we find, that these three were, Liberato de Wies, apostolical prefect in Austria; Michael Pius of Zerbe, in the province of Padua; and Samuel de Beumo, of the Milanese. The account of their death is the same as already given, though the publisher suppresses the stoning of the child, and the existence of the three other fruits of the seraphic mission, through the endeavours of father Michael Pius of Zerbe, of the province of Milan. The child, too, stoned to death with his father, was six years old, and was, as Elias says, fourth son of Michael. It was in 1714 this catastrophe happened, which will bring the entrance of these fathers into Nubia about the time of the murder of M. du Roule: so consistent with every crime is fanaticism and false religion.

The barbarous monks, gratified in the first instance, could not be contented without extending their vengeance to Abba Gregorius, the Abyssinian priest, the interpreter. But David, who found, upon trial, that, in going to attend the priests in Walkayt, he had only obeyed the express command of Oustas, then his sovereign, absolutely refused to suffer him to be either tried, or punished, but dismissed him, without further censure, or question, to his native country.

While David was thus employed at Gondar, news were brought to him that his brother, Bacuffa, had left the Galla, and was then in a small town in Begemder, called Wetan. It was this prince who, together with fifty others of the royal family, were let down from the mountain of Wechne, upon Oustas's son being proposed, and he alone refused to return upon his brother's accession to the throne. David sent Azaleffi, Guebra Mehedin, and Badjerund Welled de l'Oul, to Wetan, where they apprehended Ba-

cuffa by surprise, and lodged him in the mountain of Wechne, after having cut off a very small part of the tip of his nose, which was scarcely discernible when he came to the throne.

Kasmati Georgis had been banished to the mountain in the reign of the late king, where he had contracted an intimate friendship with David. He had also married a sister of Ozoro Mamet, by whom Yasous had several children, particularly one Welleda Georgis, a prince then of years to govern, and confined to the mountain *. David, on his coming to the throne, did not forget his old friendship on the mountain; and, passing by Emfras, he sent to Wechne to bring down Kasmati Georgis to Aringo, one of the king's palaces in Begemder, where he intended to pass the summer. On his return he gave him the government of Gojam; and his favourite, Egne, his uncle, dying at this time, very much regretted, Georgis was also created Betwudet in his place.

This year Abuna Marcus died; and his successor, Abuna Christodulus, arriving the third day of November, this made the calling of another assembly of the clergy absolutely necessary, although, from the humour the last was in, during the whole time of their meeting, the king was very little inclined to it.

The monks in Abyssinia, as I have often said, are divided into two bodies, those of Debra Libanos, and those of Abba Eustathius. Some have imagined, that the difference between these two bodies arises from a dispute about two natures in Christ. But this is from misinformation; for, were a dispute to arise about the two natures in Christ, each party would declare the other a heretic; but, at present, a few equivocal words, used to define the mode and moment of our Saviour's

* Welled Georgis, Atsham Georgis or Bacuffa.—E.

incarnation, though neither opinion is thought heretical *, have the effect to make them enemies all their lives.

The Abuna is the head of the Abyssinian church; yet as he is known to be a slave of the Mahometans, upon his first arrival, and permission obtained from the king, the assembly meets in a large outer court, or square, before the palace, where he is interrogated, and declares which of the two opinions he adopts. If he has been properly advised, he declares for the ruling and strongest party; though sometimes he is determined, by the address of those about him, to join with the weakest. Very often, if he had no instruction on his arrival, he does not know what this reference means; for no trace of such dispute exists among his brethren in Egypt. He is, moreover, a stranger to the language and the words containing either opinion, which, for shortness sake, are made to mean a great deal more than they at first seem to import; and, whether freely or literally translated, are equally unintelligible to a foreigner. After the Abuna has declared his choice, this is announced by beat of drum to the people, and is called Nagar Haimanout, the Proclamation of the Faith. The ordinary effect of this declaration is to make the person who is at the head of one party, an adversary to him who is the head of the other, all his life after.

The king at his accession makes his declaration also. The clergy maintain, that he should do this in an assembly called for that purpose, though the king denies that there is any necessity for the clergy to be present. He considers it as his privilege to choose his own

* But there can be no doubt both opinions are absolute heresy, in the most liberal sense of that word, as expressly denying our Saviour's consubstantiality.

time and place, and announces it to the people, by proclamation, at what time, and in what manner, he thinks most convenient.

Although David had given permission to assemble the clergy to hear the Abuna's declaration, he did not think himself bound to assist at it. He therefore, sent orders to the monks of Debra Libanos, and those of Abba Eustathius, to go to the Abuna with Betwudet Georgis, who should interrogate the Abuna, and report the answer to the king, which, thereupon, he would order to be proclaimed to the people. The monks of Debra Libanos refused this, as they did not consider Georgis as indifferent, being known to be a staunch Eustathian. They declared, therefore, they would neither hear nor regard what the Abuna said, unless it was in the king's presence; an indulgence which David had determined not to grant them.

Betwudet Georgis, the great officers of state, and most of the people of consideration about Gondar, waited upon the Abuna as the king had commanded; and the Betwudet having desired him to make his profession, he would only give this evasive answer, That his faith was, in all respects, the same as that of Abba Marcos, and Abba Sanuda, the ancient and orthodox Abunas.

This answer left every party at liberty to imagine that the Abuna was their own. But this evasion did not content the king, who therefore ordered the Betwudet, without taking further notice of the Abuna, to make proclamation in terms of the profession of the monks of Abba Eustathius. This occasioned great heats among the monks of Debra Libanos. They ran all with one accord to the Itchegue's house, for he is their general, or chief of their convent, and here they came to the most violent resolutions, declaring that they would die either together, or man by man, in support of their privileges and the freedom of their as-

semblies. From the Itchegue's house they ran to the Abuna's, without soliciting, or receiving, any permission from the king; and, upon interrogation, they succeeded with the Abuna to the height of their wishes; for he answered in the precise words of their profession: "One God, of the Father alone, united to a body perfectly human, consubstantial with ours, and by that union becoming the Messiah;" in direct opposition to what was proclaimed by the king's order at the gate of the palace the day before: "Perfect God and perfect man, by the union one Christ, whose body is composed of a precious substance, called Bahery, not consubstantial with ours, or derived from his mother."

Had they stopt here it had been well; but the victory was too great, too unexpected, and complete, to admit of their sitting quietly down without a triumph. They returned, therefore, from the Abuna's, frantic with joy, shouting, and singing aloud, in particular, one kind of song, or hallelujah, used always upon victories obtained over infidels. As they passed the door of the king's palace, some of the officers of the household, Azage Zakery, Azage Tecla Haimanout, and Badjerund Walleda David, moderate men, lovers of peace, and inclined to no party, endeavoured to persuade them to content themselves with what they had done, to disperse, and each go to his home, before some mischief overtook them. But they were too high-minded. They redoubled their songs; and, in this manner, again assembled in the Itchegue's house to deliberate on what farther they were to attempt; when one of the monks, a prophet, or dreamer, declared, "That God had opened his eyes, and that he then saw a cherub with a flaming sword guarding the Itchegue's gate." With such a centinel

they concluded that they were perfectly safe from any attempts of man.

In the mean time, however, the king was violently affected at the seditious behaviour of the monks; nor did he hesitate a moment in what manner he was to punish it. As they had employed the song which was sung only for victories obtained over infidels, by which they meant to allude particularly to the king, he detached a body of Pagan Galla to chastise them. Having surrounded the Ichegue's house, where the monks were assembled, they forced open the gate, (and the cherub with the flaming sword not interfering) they fell, sword in hand, upon the unarmed priests, and in an instant laid above a hundred of the principal of them dead upon the floor. They then sallied out with their bloody weapons into the street, and hewed to pieces those that attended the procession, and who were still diverting themselves with their song. Gondar now appeared like a town taken by storm; every street was covered with the dead, and dying; and this massacre continued till next day at noon, when, by proclamation, the king ordered it to cease.

David, now satisfied as to the priests, thought he owed the Abuna a mortification for his double-dealing. He sent, therefore, the soldiers to take him out of his house, and bring him to the gate of the palace, where the poor wretch, half-dead with fear, expected every moment to fall by the bloody hands of the Djawi. Having enjoyed his panic some time, the king ordered him to be placed close beside the kettle-drum, and a profession of faith was made in the royal presence, and announced by beat of drum to the people, agreeing in every respect to that published the first day by the Betwudet Georgis, and directly contradicting what he had said

with his own mouth to the monks of Debra Libanos, which was the occasion of the riot.

This bloody, indiscriminate massacre had comprehended too many men of worth and distinction not to occasion great discontent among the principal people both within and without the palace. Conspiracies against the king were now everywhere openly talked of, the fruits of which soon appeared. David fell sick, and those about him endeavoured to persuade him that it was the remains of an injury which he had lately received from a fall off his horse. But, upon the meeting of a council on the 9th of March 1719, it was discovered and proved, that Kasmati Late and Ras Georgis had employed Kutcho, keeper of the palace, to give strong poison to the king, which he had taken that morning from the hands of a Mahometan. Ras Georgis was then brought before the council, and scarcely denied the fact; upon which his only son was ordered to be hewn to pieces before his face, and immediately after the father's eyes were pulled out. Kutcho, keeper of the palace, and the Mahometan who gave the poison, were hewn to pieces with swords before the gate of the palace, and their mangled bodies thrown to the dogs. The king died that evening in great agony.

The king's favourite, Betwudet Georgis, found himself now in a most dangerous situation. David his protector was dead, and he was left now alone to answer for those bloody measures of which he was universally believed to be the adviser. It was absolutely necessary, therefore, if possible, to secure a successor of David's own family, who might stop the prosecutions against him for steps the king had adopted as his own, and as such had carried into execution.

We have already observed, that, when banished to the mountain of Wechne by Oustas, he had contracted there, first a friendship with David, and at the same time, with another prince, Ayto Welled Georgis, who was son to Yasous by Ozoro Mamet, whose sister Georgis had married, and consequently was uncle to Ayto Welled Georgis, as having married his aunt, sister to Ozoro Mamet. With this prince, now arrived at manhood, he knew himself perfectly secure; and, therefore, a number of the men in power being then assembled at his house, he lost no time, but surrounded it with a body of soldiers. He proposed to them Welled Georgis as immediate successor to David. The people present, seeing themselves in the soldiers' hands, and convinced from recent examples, that Georgis was not very tender in the use of them, in appearance cheerfully, and without hesitation, approved of the Betwudet's choice; and Lika Jonathan, one of the chief civil judges, performed the office of crier, proclaiming with an audible voice, "Ayto Welleda Georgis, brother to our late king David, son of our great king Yasous, he is now our king. Mourn for the king that is dead, but rejoice with the king that is alive." This is the ordinary stile of the proclamation. Mutual congratulations and promises passed among the members of the meeting, but with very different resolutions.

All the company, escorted by a body of archers, and another of fuzileers, with Betwudet Georgis at their head, repaired to the great place before the palace to make the same proclamation, by beat of drum, that they had done in the Betwudet's house. They found the drum ready, and the whole body of the king's household troops under arms, and drawn up before it. Upon the sight of their companions,

the soldiers left the Betwudet, and fell into a proper place reserved vacant for them by their brethren. Without loss of time the drum was beat, and a proclamation made, "Bacuffa, son of Yasous, is our king! Mourn for the dead, and rejoice with the living." Loud acclamations from the people were echoed back again by the soldiers, and Bacuffa's name was received with universal acclamations. Some of the principal people then went to the council-chamber, and sent proper officers, with a good body of troops, to escort the king from Wechne.

Upon their arrival they found the sentiments of the princes upon the election widely different from those testified by the people. They all to a man declared their dissent from that election. They upbraided Bacuffa for his brutal manners; for his violent, unsociable, unrelenting temper, from which, they said, they had the cruelest consequences to apprehend; and, indeed, it was not without great reason that they made these remonstrances; for Bacuffa, when he escaped from the mountain, fled for refuge among the Galla, and received a very strong tincture of the savage manners of that nation, which neither those of Gondar nor the army could have an opportunity to judge of. Resolute, active, and politic, he was very well formed to hold the reins of government in unsettled times; but his temper, of itself exceedingly suspicious, and the little regard he had for the life of man, made his whole reign (as it was feared) one continued tragedy. So that, notwithstanding the goodness of his understanding, and many acts of wisdom and justice, he is still considered as a bloody, merciless tyrant, and his memory regarded with the greatest detestation.

On the first news of the insurrection of the princes on Wechne, Kasmati Amha Yasous, governor of

Begemder, marched with his whole force, and encamped under the mountain. He then rescued Bacuffa from the hands of his relations; and, in order to obviate, as much as possible, any future trouble, he obliged the different branches of the royal family to a reconciliation with each other, making Bacuffa, on the one side, swear that he was not to remember nor revenge any injury or affront received upon the mountain; and the princes, that they would forget all old disagreements, consider Bacuffa as their king, and not create him any trouble in his reign by escapes, or other rebellious practices.

As it was then night, Bacuffa staid in the house of Azage Assarat, and next morning came to Serbraxos, whence he sent to the monks of Tedda to meet him there. From Tedda he proceeded to Gondar, where he was met by the Abuna and Itchegue, amidst the acclamations of a prodigious number of people.

BACUFFA.

From 1719 to 1729.

Bloody Reign—Exterminates the Conspirators—Gains Lasta—Nation disturbed by a report of his Death—His general Character.

HONEST men, who loved their country, saw the dangerous situation it was then in. Every day had produced instances of a growing indifference to that form of government, which, from the earliest times, they had accounted sacred; and upon every slight and unreasonable disgust a person of consequence thought he had met with, a party was immediately formed, and nothing less agreed on than directly imbruing their hands in the blood of their sovereign.

A prince, who had qualities of mind able to put a stop to these enormities before they involved the state in one scene of anarchy and ruin, was necessary. Bacuffa was to answer these expectations; and, in the end, he was found to exceed them. Silent, secret, and unfathomable in his designs, surrounded by soldiers who were his own slaves, and by new men of his own creation, he removed those tyrants who opposed their sovereigns upon the smallest provocation,

Conspiracy followed conspiracy, and rebellion rebellion; but all were defeated, as soon as they had birth, by the superior activity and address of the king *.

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* Atzham Georgis, called by the Galla, Bacuffa, the inexorable, having thus ascended the throne, assumed the name of Adebar Segued. His reign extended only to nine years, and three months; but, short as it was, it exhibited many proofs of the king's severe character and wise administration. As the annals of this period are very complete, the public transactions of Bacuffa are well known, though his motives seldom escaped from his own impenetrable breast. To enumerate these transactions in detail, as they are given in the Ethiopic chronicle, would exceed the limits of this history; but the principal events of his reign are given in the following narrative.

Bacuffa, when a youth, had accompanied his father Yasous in the Galla wars, where he acquired fame for his early intrepid courage. As he had been educated amongst people of that nation, he charmed the rude tribes of the Djawi with the idea that a sovereign of their own manners and character would one day ascend the throne of Habbesh. Those who, on account of age and experience, were considered by their countrymen as endowed with a knowledge of futurity, ventured to predict that he should rule both the Metsha and Toluma in a long and glorious reign. In consequence of this early popularity, he had, several times, under the three preceding kings, escaped from Wechne, and absconded himself in the country, which flattered him with hopes of the crown.

David expired on the twelfth Ginbot A. M. 7213. Of all the principal actors during his short and bloody reign, none were more unfortunate than Betwudet Georgis, who first proclaimed the new king at Gondar. Finding that Bacuffa was detained at Wechne by the violence of his competitors, and frightened at the prospect of vengeance on account of his late conduct, the Ras, along with his father-in law Gebra Medehin, Kasmati Yustos, and Lik-magwass

Mamo, deserted the cause of his sovereign, and, on the third night after the sedition at Wechne, left the capital for Gojam. The honour of confirming the king was reserved for Amha Yasous, Kasmati of Begemder, who surrounded the mountain with his cavalry, terrified the princes into submission, and conducted Bacuffa to the capital. This transaction occupied nearly the space of a week, during which great excesses were committed in Gondar; the wuladjat, or household troops, having plundered the houses of the Ras and his party, and quartered at large on the defenceless inhabitants. On the 17th Gimbot, the azajes, the Abuna Christodulus, and Itchegue Tecla-haimanout, with all the principal clergy, met the king at Tedda. The coronation took place on the 18th; and a large promotion immediately followed. Amha Yasous was appointed Betwudet, with the government of Begemder; Heraclius was made Ras; Negade Mammo Kasmati of Samen; Manem ligaba: Beniam, son of Abba Betaxos, Lik-magwass; Ayto Wesen-segued, son of Ras Welled Georgis, takakin billetanagueta, and Helawe Christos gerasmati. The former governors retained the other provinces.

In a few days after, the unfortunate Georgis returned towards Gondar, and received an order from court to chuse his place of exile. He pitched on the solitudes of Magwena; but the monks exclaiming, "Here is the man who shed the blood of our brethren like water!" so disturbed his retreat, that he was forced to supplicate the king to change his banishment to the Kolla za Adagat, a low unwholesome place in the north of the kingdom.

The rains were begun, when accounts arrived that the Djawi, Basso and Luban Galla, whom Yasous the Great had brought from Guba, and placed on the hither bank of the Nile, in Damot, were all in rebellion. Mamo, Kasmati of Damot, conveyed this intelligence, which determined Bacuffa to visit that province in person. He assembled his forces in haste, and taking the route of Aringo, every day collected a larger army. His soldiers were struck with admiration and terror at the violent majesty of their king, who, mounted on a fierce courser, crossed the Reb at the head of his cavalry.

He was dressed in white; a large canopy was borne over his head by those who followed on horseback behind, and

Gebra Leoul, the Lik-magwass, carried the spear and shield before him. Having crossed the Nile, the king halted at Agamoha, where he was met by Beniam, Azage of Ibaba. As the Djawi came not in to throw themselves at his feet, he ordered Kasm. Tesfa Yasous to slay and plunder the whole nation, wherever he should find them; though, at first, to induce them to surrender, he had forbidden the soldiers to spoil the villages, and had cut off the ears of several who had transgressed these commands. Having appointed Gerasmati Helawe Christos his fit-aurari, he arrived at Enamora, where he was met by the people of Damot, and the Agows of Abolla and Buta. With these he ordered Kasmati Mamo and Azaje Beniam to pursue the Galla into the mountains of Damot, whither he was informed they had fled along with their cattle. He then advanced to Gafat, seizing the honey, butter, and herds of the enemy; whose corn was utterly destroyed, and cottages wasted, by the army. Driven to the last extremity, the Talta, and several other tribes of Gojam and Damot, submitted to the king's mercy, and pleading their Christianity, and former obedience to his father, were pardoned. The Zawe and Umber, on the other hand, defeated Basha Arkilidas, and slew a number of his soldiers. Baeda finding the Galla in general disposed for peace, ordered his officers to desist from the war, and returning to Ibaba, directed, by the usual stages, his march to Gondar.

Many inveterate abuses required a vigorous reform in the capital. But these were objects of inferior consideration to the king, whose dark, imperious, and cruel character, was already better known than confirmed. His vehement temper had alarmed the nobles, no less than his gloomy disposition had terrified the Ozoros on the mountain. He was generally unpopular; for he had resolved to humble the aristocracy, that had so often insulted the throne; and depose, at pleasure, and for the slightest crimes, the greatest officers in his kingdom.

The three principal state punishments in Abyssinia, are deposition from office, imprisonment in a low, unhealthy province, and death inflicted by the guards, or the common executioner. To these may be added scourging and mutilation, of which the first is inflicted for smaller offences, and

the last on the waragnas, or pretenders to the crown, to render them incapable of the throne. These were the instruments by which the king had determined to accomplish a project, which few but himself would have been able to execute.

While Bacuffa was absent, his sister, Welleta Raphael, a haughty, ambitious woman, who had once favoured his escape from Wechne, but was now displeased at the diminution of her influence at court, had begun to intrigue with some of the nobility, and gain a party in the household troops. The king, distrusting that body of men, who had been the praetorian cohort of the former sovereigns, and frequently engaged in murder and revolution, formed around his person a select regiment of Galla, enemies to all his Abyssinian subjects, and entirely devoted to himself. In the sixth month of his reign, he sent to prison Bajerund Negade, two Kasmati's, and Gebra Mehedin, son of Ras Hezekias. These were the favourites of Ozoro Welleta Raphael, with whom he continued to maintain a shew of friendship. A waragna, the common resource of discontented nobles in Abyssinia, making his appearance soon after in Amhara, he was instantly apprehended, and condemned to lose his hand. The king, in order to sanction his own title with all the ceremonies of former princes, caused himself to be proclaimed through the whole kingdom by the new name of Masih Segued.

A private misfortune, the death of Welleta Petros, daughter of Basha Mammo, the king's mistress, threw the court into mourning, but did not interrupt the cabals of the nobility. On the 21st of Megabit, orders were given to cut off the foot of Ayto Naod, a son of Tecla haimanout the I. in Wechne, who died of the amputation; and, in the same week, the favourite, Betwudet Amha Yasous, and three other officers were committed to prison, and thence conducted to the low country of Walkait. Manem, who had been raised to the post of Billetana-gueta takakin, along with his wife, an ozoro, were, in a few months after, also banished. Tensa was made Betwudet instead of Amha-yasous; an uncle of the king was appointed to Gojam; but, in a short time, Ras Heraclius superseded the former, and united the highest offices in the kingdom.

In the second year of his reign, the king deposed the Acab

Saat Dioscuros, and elected Welled Hawaryat. At this period (Mascarram, 7215) Bacuffa formed a connection with a young lady, who was afterwards to bear a splendid part in the history of Abyssinia. This was Welleta Georgis, the daughter of Menber, Kasmati of Kuara daga, by Ozoro Encoi, a descendant of king Menas. Bacuffa had ordered Alipius, his chamberlain, to search the kingdom for beautiful women. It would seem that her brother Welled Ieoul, afterwards Ras, was, at the time, a shalaka, or inferior officer, in the guards, and abetted the connection for his own interest. Alipius represented the beauty of this young lady to the king, in terms sufficiently flattering. "I have found a daughter of kings; her eyes are as stars; joyful as the clusters of the vine. Her face is bright as the olive oil; her hair soft as the silk. Her stature is like the palm; her lips drop modesty and honour. In truth she is lovely (hamàn Mantuàb).

Bacuffa immediately sent off to Kuara one of his confidential azajes, to ask her of her grandmother Julian. "Give me thy daughter; for I have chosen her above all women." "The will of the Lord be done," said the old lady, dismissing her with full resignation to the royal order. Welleta Georgis was conveyed to court, where she ate and drank on the right hand of the king. The historian, from whom this account is taken, gives a detail of what followed in terms, which, though very characteristic of oriental manners, cannot be imitated here. A son, the offspring of this interview, was born on Friday, the 12th of Sene, the same year. He was circumcised on the 8th day; the child and mother were purified on the 40th, and the former baptized in church. He received the name of Yasous, after his grandfather, whose sceptre he was born to sway, but not with equal glory.

In the fourth month of this year, the king marched to Damot against the Talta Djawi. This expedition was made with great pomp; the army mustered at Aringo; but, before he left Gondar, the king had given orders that none of the old household guards should presume to leave the city, or approach the camp, in whatever quarter. At Ibaba, he held a council with Tsuage dadjen Beniam, commander of the Eleman and Densa the loyal Galla of Maitsha, Gerasmati Hclawe Christos, Basha Aikillidas, Bajerund Welled Georgis, Kasm. Ammonius, and Johannes, Bajerunds Paulos and

Welled leoul, along with other officers, in which it was determined, that the governors of Gojam and Damot should pursue, at their leisure, the rebellious Talta. After great feasting, the army was dismissed, the king taking a private route towards Gondar, by the way of Dingleber, on the west side of the lake of Dembea, while the officers crossed the Nile, and returned by Tedda.

At the time of this expedition, the king appointed Azaje Sinuda, a priest who had followed his father, Yasous the Great, and written an account of his last campaign to Guba and Narea, secretary and historiographer. To him we owe the annals of Bacuffa, from his accession to the time of Sinuda's death. The king treated him with great kindness; and, besides entrusting to him the education of the ozoros, gave him the highest preferment in the church of Debraberhan.

Bacuffa encamped at a considerable distance from the city; and kept the field a longer space of time, than is usual, after a summer expedition. By a strict proclamation, all the wuladje, or household troops, were still confined to Gondar. Incensed at this prohibition, the black slaves, and their leaders, some on horse and some on foot, threatened to march to the king's place of residence, and murder him. They were abetted by Ozoro Welleta Raphael, who chose, in this manner, to be revenged on her brother, for denying her a grant of certain lands, belonging to the crown. Bacuffa, informed of the licentiousness of the pages, ordered them all to Bartcho, an old palace of the Abyssinian kings, about a days journey south of Gondar. There, Beniam, the Ibaba-azage, with about a thousand Eleman and Densa Galla, fell on them, and cut them all to pieces. Similar destruction involved those, who remained at Gondar; and Ozoro Welleta Raphael was banished to Walcait.

About a month after this massacre, Bacuffa took what is called the kanoun tsama *, which means to hide himself in the palace, or retire, incognito, into some of the islands in the lake of Dembea, on pretence of devoting the time to fasting and prayer. This a common practice of the kings of Habbesh, by which they unburthen themselves of the cares of state, or spy, under the character of private persons, the

* Rule of fasting.

fidelity of their people. He had been absent only a few weeks, when he was recalled to Gondar by the death of his mother, Mariamavit. This lady, who had survived all the wives of Yasous the Great, was buried with great pomp, by her son, in the church of Debraberhan, who then retired to mourn in the island of Bridgida. Her tascar, or festival of commemoration, was kept in the first month of the ensuing year, and the king proceeded to create a new Iteghe. The woman, whom Bacuffa intended to raise to the honour of queen of Ethiopia, was of Agow extraction, of the tribe of Geberma, who had been attendant on his mother. On the 12th of the month Tekemt, he crowned her with his own hand, placed her on a throne beside himself, and made her be conducted in state to the Iteghe's palace. She spent the evening in feasting till midnight; but died before day-break of a sudden illness, probably occasioned by poison.

On the 13th of Yacatit, Amha-yasous, hitherto in disgrace, was appointed Ras, and Kasmati of Begemder. The king undertook to reconcile him with his rivals and enemies Betwudet Heraclius and Billetana Mamui, who had long opposed his promotion; but the royal favour received an ungrateful return. The new Ras, who remembered his own consequence at the election of the king, more than the honours he had afterwards enjoyed on that account, kissed the hand of his master, retired with haste to his province, and erected the standard of rebellion. In this extraordinary conduct, suspicion had a greater share than any hopes of his attaining higher preferment; his enemies were exceedingly powerful at court; and the mind of the king was always too mysterious for a powerful subject to trust, with confidence, to its silent resolutions.

After such distinguished advancement, the rebellion of the Ras was reported, rather than believed, at Gondar. The rainy season was approaching, which interrupts, during three or four months, every military operation in Abyssinia. The king was engaged in secret excursions through the country, chiefly to Tsegade and Walkait, where he had a favourite governor, called Ain Egzie, or the "eye of the Lord," to the custody of whom he entrusted all his prisoners of state. These excursions were made by him incognito, or, at most, in the company of a few individuals, who were perfectly devoted to his service and pleasures. While Bacuffa was ab-

sent, Betwudet Heraclius, greatly exasperated at the preferment of Amha-yasous, excited, at Gondar, a young man, called Hezekias, to advance pretensions to the crown. He was instructed to declare himself a descendant of Jacob, the king who was slain by Susneus at Lebart, A. D. 1607; a name which had served the purpose of every pretender, from the period mentioned above till the present time. Hezekias had no sooner declared himself, than Billetana-gueta Mamui, judging it a favourable moment to ingratiate himself with the king, apprehended this prince, and committed him to prison, till Bacuffa arrived at Gondar. The king entered the city by the way of Tedda, and a court was instantly summoned to try the Waragna, who was placed at the bar. Kurfed Mammo, a dependent of Mamui, presented himself as evidence against Hezekias, on whose person had been found a written list of his friends and accomplices. A number of these were also seized, and brought with him to receive the sentence of the law. The pretender boldly declared his name, and descent from a king; undoubtedly conscious that he could not hope for pardon. Let him die! let him die! was the unanimous verdict of a court, which never deviates, in such a trial, from the will of the sovereign. The sentence of his accomplices was pronounced with the greatest severity and rage. It was given in these words: "They must die; they must suffer ignominious death; those traitors, who have associated with him, shall die by a violent death."

This trial was scarcely finished, when the prisoners were dragged out into the great square, in Gondar, called Adebabye, by the Gasha adjagara, a regiment of Galla guards, in which Bacuffa reposed unlimited confidence. There they were massacred with lances, to the number of nine or ten persons together; and, to use the words of the historian, "their blood flowed like water." Several were mutilated, and died of their wounds. One, in particular, had his tongue and right hand cut off, and was left in the open square, in the rainy season, without any shelter. In that wounded and unprotected state he lived through the winter, subsisting on the alms of the compassionate, who did not dare to remove him from the place.

On the same day (21st Sene) the Waragna was brought to

his execution. The king revoked the sentence of death, and, affecting mercy, ordered only his hand to be cut off. He died of the amputation, as usually happens, in these cases, in Abyssinia; for "the king of heaven had not pity on him, after the king of the earth had extended to him his mercy."

Kurfed Mammo, the detector of this conspiracy, was immediately advanced to the post of Asaleffi, or groom of the bed-chamber. Heraclius, the Betwudet, though the principal mover of all this sedition, had carefully abstained from appearing in rebellion with Hezekias. His policy, however, did not prevent his disgrace. Five days after the execution of the Waragna, he lost his place of Betwudet, to which Tesfa Yasous succeeded, and Heraclius was banished from the camp and city.

In the meantime, Amha-yasous had taken such measures as promised to render his treason completely successful. Begemder, the richest province of Abyssinia, is not more abundant in resources for an army, than fortified by its natural situation against the attacks of an enemy. He had gained to his party the noblest families of Begemder and Amhara, and entered into alliance with Gubala, an independant prince of the Tcheretsagow nation, by giving him his daughter; in return for which condescension, he secured a retreat to himself and his forces, amongst the impassable defiles and mountains of Lasta. This province, the most barbarous in the kingdom, poured its mountaineers around his standard, and gave defiance to the royal authority and arms.

Bacuffa, still uncertain of the purposes of the Ras, dispatched for Begemder, Lika-Youstas, to order him to prepare his tribute, and come to Gondar with all expedition. This he haughtily refused to do, and added expressions which clearly revealed his intention of disobedience. The messenger returned with the news to Gondar, where Amha-Yasous was declared a traitor, deposed from all his places, and Ephrem appointed in his stead to the government of Begemder. An army was instantly levied, which, under the command of the new governor, took the road of Begemder, where the Ras awaited its coming, determined to conquer or die in the field. Bacuffa followed soon after, with a favourite band of Galla, in which he placed his principal confidence, as they considered him as a prince of their own

nation, who loved their country and manners, and deserved the allegiance due to their native sovereigns.

It had been usual in royal expeditions to carry the crown to the field, as a mark of dignity ready to be assumed by the king, whenever he thought proper to place it on his head at a public audience of his ministers, after obtaining a victory Bacuffa discontinued this practice, as he feared that it might fall into the hands of his enemies, or be seized by rebels in his own camp, for the purposes of treason. Instead of it, he substituted the sele kuarat rasou, a picture of our Saviour, with the *crown* of thorns, a relic of great antiquity, highly venerated by the people, and much more likely to procure the defeat of his enemies. Azaje Sanuda, his chosen historiographer, records this important innovation with suitable gravity, as well as the barbaric pomp with which his master took the field against the rebels.

But Kasmati Ephrem lost no time in taking possession of his turbulent province. Before the king came up with the rear of the army, the new governor found Amha-Yasous, on the fourth of Tekemt, at Gebetsawit Washa, where, after a most violent and sanguinary engagement, the Ras, and many of his principal officers, lay dead upon the ground. The king arrived next day, and went to see the field, now covered with the slain, and finding the victory decisive, he returned to the camp, raising a temporary throne, and sat on it the whole evening, receiving the bloody trophies (shabshaba) which the soldiers, according to their barbarous custom, threw before him in heaps. Tawalid Hatzin, a common soldier, brought the heads and other spoils of Amha-Yasous, and his wife Ozoro Endjori, one of whom had fallen in the battle, and the other by the hands of the conquering army.

On the 7th the king went and plundered the house and lands of Ayo, a wealthy nobleman of Begemder, who had joined with Amha-Yasous, but had escaped from the field to Lasta. All Begemder was subdued immediately, but a much more difficult country continued in rebellion. Gubala withdrew himself to his mountains, from which he descended, at times, to the plains below, where he destroyed whatever he could not convey to his retreat. On the 18th, Bacuffa, intent on harassing his enemy, crossed the Tacazze, and arriving in Wera-ber, in Lasta, burnt the villages and

territories of Gubala to the foot of his impregnable fortress Amakina, among the mountains. Being well assured that no impression could be made on this place by his army, the king commanded his generals to waste the country, and then retire without any further attempts. These orders did not satisfy Billetana Gueta Mamui, who led his division against the enemy in so unguarded a manner, that the people of Lasta surprised him in the districts called Gosha and Wogia, where the bravest of his officers and soldiers were cut to pieces in a most destructive and unfortunate battle. The Fitaurari Gebra-medchin, his brother Yabo-barea, Medebai Agne, and his sons, Jin-serar Yasous, and his three brothers from Walwadje, near relations of the king, were among the slain. Many of the Galla guards, called Adjagerotch, fell with their commander Welled Selasse. The Bursa and Tchefinta, regiments of the household, suffered extremely, and left many of their officers to be mutilated by the Lasta barbarians. Such, however, was not the fate of the Billetana-gueta himself. He fled in a cowardly manner, having first abandoned his horse and arms, and disguised himself with the skin of a sheep, in which he escaped from the pursuit of his enemies.

Bacuffa, naturally violent, was enraged beyond all bounds at this impolitic behaviour and ignominious defeat. He vowed to conquer Lasta, let the difficulties be what they would; but his astonishment was equal to his rage when he found that the whole council and army refused to serve. The defeats of Susneus, Facilidas, and Hannes, were urged against the probability of his success. A convenient deputation arrived from Gubala, asking mercy from the king, and making concessions. These were listened to with abundant goodness; and though they merited no attention from a prince whose mind could be satisfied only with revenge, they furnished a pretence for complying with the force of necessity. Bacuffa drew off his remaining forces from the mountains of Lasta, and entered Gondar on the 7th of Tahsas. He was met by processions of the clergy, and people of Gondar, who attempted to conceal the national sorrow, under demonstration of joy and the applauses of victory.

The winter was spent by the king in thoughts of revenge. Mamui, whose unguarded conduct had occasioned the dis-

aster of Lasta, dared not to approach the royal presence, but fled into sanctuary in the Abuna's house, whither the king sent the judges and nobles to bring him to trial. The court was constituted in this unavailing asylum, by the Abuna himself, as chief judge of the church, and Mammi was accused and convicted of having used ill the king's daughter, whom he had married, and of having been the cause of the defeat in Lasta. He was then cast into close prison, whence he was soon after banished to Walkait, and died there in great misery. Cutcho, a Galla, was made Billetana-gueta-takakin in his stead, an office which was also to prove fatal to him in the end.

On the 28th Mascaram (the fifth year of his reign,) Bacuffa left Gondar, and went to Aringo to assemble his armies. The usual proclamation was everywhere made: "Hear, hear; let every man clothe his household, for it is not known where I may take him." Troops assembled from all quarters, particularly the Djawi, Basso, and Yaleman Galla, from Damot and Gojam, under Kasmati Mammo. A multitude of ozoros and monks wished to join the army; but the king prohibited them all, not excepting his two secretaries, Sanuda and Demetrious, who urged the necessity of their presence, that they might see the actions of the king. No, no, said Bacuffa; return to Gondar, I will tell you the whole when I arrive there, after the expedition. The army then marched towards Begemder; on the borders of which Ayo, Sebaste, Asahel, and other noblemen, conspirators with Amha-yasous, surrendered themselves to the king's mercy, and were pardoned. Moving along through Begemder to Meshalamia, on the 28th Tekemt he crossed the Tacazze, and entered Lasta. The whole route was distinguished by little more than the perpetual feasting which the king promoted in the army. His liberality was well calculated to gain the hearts of his barbarous troops, who were much more frequently employed in slaughtering sheep and oxen, than in battle. The historians of his reign enter into long details of his splendour and magnificence. In public he never appeared but in state, with a canopy over his head, even in the most difficult marches; while his cruelty formed a striking addition to the tyrannical air, and savage majesty, which he loved to affect. His approach to Lasta had the ef-

fect which he seems to have desired. Without attempting resistance, Gubala was panic-struck, and, not even daring to guard the impregnable pass of Tchetchicó, where so many Abyssinian armies had perished, he implored the king's mercy, and offered to surrender his son as a hostage, give up the unfortunate daughter of Amha-yasous, two thrones of gold, which he had received from the king of Adel, along with much precious furniture; and pay an annual tribute to the king of Abyssinia. On hearing these proposals, Bacuffa forbade his Djawi to ravage the district of the Gelasots, the subjects of Gubala. All these conditions were punctually fulfilled. The king feasted his nobles again on this occasion, while the women and children of the Gelasots danced before his tent. Gubala's son was magnificently clothed, and returned to his father, who, from this time, seems to have formed a friendly opinion of the Abyssinian government.

The king, after this treaty, recalled his marauding parties of Galla under Kasmati Mamo, and repassed the Tacazze into Begemder. Aylo, lately restored to favour, entertained the king as he proceeded on his way, and delivered into his hands two or three pretenders to the crown, whom Amha-yasous had kept for political purposes. The district of Maket having failed in its attention to the king on his return, it was given up to the Basso Galla, to be plundered; a kind of sacrifice to the rapacity of that nation, which had been disappointed at Lasta, rather than from any offence in which the unfortunate inhabitants had exceeded their neighbours.

The entry to Gondar was attended with much more real joy than had been displayed in the preceding year, and the king endeavoured to surpass his former splendour and munificence, in feasting the nobles and army. Though his state be described at full length by his historians, it is not of such importance as to be repeated here. Bacuffa was anxious to publish the story of his own exploits, as recorded by these historians; and at one of his principal feasts, he called on Samuda, his secretary, "to bring the book of the history which he had written at this time, and read it before the people, that those may hear who have not heard it." Secretary Samuda produced the book (of which the author of these travels brought home a copy), and read it, after dinner, to

the whole court; who, no doubt, applauded the *elegant* and *powerful* style in which the historian had emblazoned their master.

While the king had been employed in this prosperous expedition, the religious part of his kingdom had also been engaged in hostilities. The Abuna Christodulus, a rare example of ecclesiastical industry in Ethiopia, had so far surpassed the greater part of his predecessors, as to acquire a tolerable knowledge of the language of the country of which he was primate. His learning was not to be lost; he applied it instantly in the service of religion, and declared himself so decidedly in favour of the monks of Debra-libanos, that the Itchegue, Hannes, joined himself to the Abuna in terms of the holiest friendship. The hermits of Werk-leba viewed this connection with abhorrence, as most of them were offended at the preference shewn to the sect whom they detested, by a man who possessed the king's confidence, and expressed, at all times, an indecent contempt of their sanctity and opinions.

As the Abuna had learned to harangue in Geez, he gave them a long defence of his religious sentiments; which is related by the historian Sanuda, but scarcely worthy of being translated into English. Bacuffa, whose religion was that of peace among churchmen, was so pleased with the primate's opinions, that he sent him a rich suit of canonical vestments, and ordered Serachmascry Mammo to lead his household troops to the banks of the Kahha, where the Abuna and Itchegue were to celebrate the baptism of the Epiphany. Two thrones were raised for the primate and the superior. They both took incense from the same censer, and blessed the waters with a mutual prayer. The Abuna read, in Geez, the gospel of St Matthew, in the appropriate place, "In those days came John the Baptist," &c. much to the astonishment of all the clergy present, who never had heard a primate who understood the language of their country. Both the dignitaries accompanied the arks, or small consecrated chests, in which the sacramental elements are always kept in Abyssinia, and which are often carried from place to place, to the doors of the churches whence they had been taken. The unanimity of the Abuna and It-

chegue was the more surprising, as it was uncommon, and seemed to be the consequence of united learning and piety.

While these Christian virtues were shining at Gondar, the monks of Magwena brought loud and grievous accusations against Ain Egzie, the king's favourite, and governor of Walkait. They affirmed, that, under pretences of attachment to the monks of Debra-libanos, he had distressed their monastery, and encroached on their territories. Bacuffa resolved to examine their cause in person, set out from Gondar in the month of Jacatit, came to Corcora, next to Waalia, and then to Werk-lebeho; where he was received by a procession of all the ecclesiastical savages who inhabit that sequestered desert. After hearing their complaints, he proceeded to Fetchana and Tcherkin; from the latter of which places he crossed the Angrab, and, at a spot in its vicinity, called Bahar Gezirit, commenced a great hunting; in the course of which he killed a rhinoceros (arwe haris) with his own hand. He then returned to Gondar by the same stages; where, on the 29th Jacatit, Badjerund Welled Gabriel brought Ain Egzie, his favourite, who had for some time been in disgrace, to kiss his hand, and pay his tribute.

On the 16th Megabit, the following month, a remarkable stranger came towards the metropolis. This was Gubala, prince of Lasta, who for thirty years had lived independent of the Abyssinian government. Having been charmed with the manner in which Bacuffa had treated his son, he resolved to visit the king, and kiss his hand, like a common governor and subject. The king ordered his own palace on the Kahha to be fitted up for this illustrious visitant; and in three days after, admitted him, and his two sons, to a solemn audience, at which he received their submission, and clothed them all in the most sumptuous dresses. Gubala then returned to his country; and, on his arrival at Amakina, all Lasta declared for the king. Other distant provinces were not less obedient. Tecla Woldo le Woldo, Kasmati of Tigre, arrived at Gondar next month with his tribute, and an immense quantity of the finest gold stuffs, Indian cloths, and European furniture; articles of the most acceptable kind in Abyssinia.

Amidst all this submission, the king was not entirely at peace. On Good Friday, at the very time when the gover-

nor of Tigre was at Gondar, a Waragna was hanged in the public square, who was said to have been connected with Amha-yasous. In the same month, Betwudet Tesfa-yasous, and all the judges, were summoned to a formal meeting on the cause of Wust-Azaje Welled Gabriel, and Dejami Daid Hezekias, who accused one another of conspiring the death of the king, and other treasonable practices. The Wust-azage was banished to Walkait, and Nathaniel of Dembea nominated in his place; a man whom the king loved for his abilities, but who had been tried for continual extortion in his office of levying the hatze kolla, or household flour, from that province.

The sixth year of the king's reign was distinguished by no memorable action. In the course of it died Ephrem Kasmati of Begemder, who was succeeded by Palambaras Helawe Christos. Heikel was on this advanced to the Palambarasate, and Nicholas of Kuara made Shalaka of the Tanakim, a corps of the household troops. He was related to the queen Berhan Mogass, whose brother Welled Peoul had for some time been Badjerund. None of her kindred appear in any high office during the life of her husband.

In this year, a violent strife, which had been long fomented on both sides, broke out between Tecla-haimanout of Tigre, and Basha Retu, the latter of whom accused Tecla of being a Waragna, or pretender to the crown, and a son of Yasous the Great. Retu was convicted of having been guilty of extreme cruelties in an office which he had held in Tigre; but the case of Tecla-haimanout could not be decided till his mother was brought from that province. Ozoro Kesose being interrogated in court, declared, that "When she "was a little girl of seven years of age, she was married to "Kasmati Zamariam, of Tigre, to whom she had born seven "children, and never had left the province."

Though this deposition tended to absolve Tecla-haimanout, several persons were executed on pretence of their being children of the royal family. Three were hanged in the tarade for seditious practices, and the cruelty of the king was in no respect abated by the news he received daily of the prosperity of his provinces. Kasmati Woodage, of Amhara, and the Kasmati of Begemder, both arrived at court with

their full tribute, and many trophies of their victories over the Pagan Galla of Angot and Walaka. The Tanakin, or household guards, during this winter, rose in a kind of mutiny against their commanding officer Shalaka Salla; and the king, judging their complaint well founded, ordered Salla to receive 350 lashes with a whip at Adebabye, the common place of execution. On the 6th Nahasse, died Azaje Sanuda, the rector of Debra-berhan, the king's favourite historiographer, and teacher of his children. He had accompanied Yasous the Great, in the celebrated campaign against the Galla beyond the Nile, and written an account of it. He wrote the Tarikh, or history of Bacuffa, as found in the MSS., till the time of his death; the rest of this reign was written by Weled Confu Michael. Bacuffa, in the following week, went up to Debra-berhan church, to inquire about his death, at which he testified many signs of regret.

During the remaining part of the rainy season, the king, either through natural melancholy and ill health, or from political motives, appeared in public as seldom as possible. His Djawi guards, who never deserted the palace for a moment, the queen, and a few confidents, chiefly Galla, alone knew whither he was gone, or in what he was engaged. On Monday the 6th Mascaram, about the time the Abyssinians call the third hour, the sun was eclipsed, or at least so darkened that the stars appeared. The prophets seized this opportunity of filling the city and nation with a terror of future calamities and revolutions, which they said this phenomenon portended. The suspense of the public mind was much increased by the uncertainty of the king's health, whom many wished in his grave, and the effects of whose vengeance were with justice dreaded by all. In the month of Tekempt following, the king appeared nowhere in public; a report went abroad, and was generally believed, that he was dead, and the intrigues in the court and army about the succession rose to an alarming height. Cutcho, the Billetana-gueta takakin, assembled his musqueteers and household cavalry, paraded the streets, and sent persons to Wechne to elect a king. All the nobles, priests, and forces, the Galla guards being excepted, were divided into parties. They had declared their sentiments more freely than prudence could warrant, when,

to their utter confusion, Bacuffa appeared on the 6th Tekempt, in the middle of his Gasha adjazara, riding to the church of Debra Berhan, in his usual style of pomp and magnificence.

All the judges, nobility, and priests, followed the king, in the utmost terror and humiliation, on account of their rash conduct. The Galla guards entirely prohibited their approach; and it was uncertain whether the king did not intend a general massacre. On his return to the palace, they all fell on their knees before him, while on horseback, and entreated his forgiveness. He dismissed them with considerable coldness, saying, "Go to your houses, you shall "see me to-morrow." Next day he appeared on the throne with great majesty, and ordered the judges to pronounce sentence on Cutcho, and those who had been active in the late disturbance. Cutcho, with two of his officers, were condemned to die, and the houses of Ozoro Welleta Selasse, the king's sister, of her husband Kasmati Netcho, and of Ozoro Autsefit, daughter of Kasmati Baheri, and their dependents, were given up to the Galla to be plundered. About fourteen persons were hewn in pieces by the guards in the public square, and their bodies cast out of the town, without burial. On the 3d of Hedar, the king went to Wechne, and threatened the Ozoros most severely, after which, he indulged them with hopes of forgiveness. His conduct to these unhappy exiles had been greatly influenced by the repugnance they had shewn to his election. His own brother, Hannes, had escaped from the mountain, a few years before this time; and, being taken, was condemned to lose his hand, which was instantly executed. Hannes survived this amputation, and was led from prison, at the age of seventy, to mount the throne of his brother's grandchild—an honour in which his heart felt no pleasure, and that only hastened him a few days more prematurely to the grave.

In the month of Jacutit, the king went a second time to hunt the elephant at Tcherkin, whence he returned, and spent the winter in peace. A number of changes took place among his servants, and several persons were executed for high treason, and other offences of state.

In the month of Tekemt, the eighth year of his reign, he

deposed the Itchegue Za Woldo, and appointed Tecla Haimanout. A Waragna, called Alipius, was brought from Lasta, and hanged, after a trial in the public square. Yasous had been nominated to the dangerous dignity of Ras; but, in less than an year's time, he was deposed, and Elias preferred in his stead. Tecla-haimanout, who had been banished to Teherkin, as a son of Yasous the Great, was brought to Gondar a second time, and condemned to lose his hand. Georgis, Kasmati of Samen, was banished with his family to the Kolla; Retu, promoted to his place, which he held only a few months, and was then stript of all his honours. The king took the dignity of Betwudet from Tesfa-Yasous, and gave it to one Telefanes.

The health of Bacuffa declined rapidly; but this he concealed with the utmost care for about two years, from all his nobility and people. He passed the rainy seasons in great retirement, shut up in the palace, and surrounded with the Galla guards. He died on the first day of Mascaram, after a short, but active reign of nine years and three months*. As his mind was gloomy and tyrannical, owing to nature, his Galla education, and his early disappointments, his government was not more salutary than dreaded in a turbulent nation. His sanguinary courage broke the aristocracy in pieces, which had long oppressed the country, but he introduced some dangerous precedents, which, however, have not been often imitated.

The queen concealed his death till she had formed her own party from Kuara, and gained an ascendant over the Galla guards. It is uncertain whether Bacuffa loved either her or her son, with much affection. Those persons, who protected her afterwards, were all in low stations at his death. Welled le'oul, her brother, was only Bajerund, or chamberlain; Waragna was a Shalaka, or captain of the Galla guards, and had not yet obtained the government of any province. The accounts given by the author of these travels about Welled Georgis do not seem confirmed by any thing

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* He was crowned, Ginbot 17, A. M. 7213, and died 1st Mascaram, 7223. Ethiop. calc.; he reigned nine years, three months, and twenty days. The year of his accession was 1721, and of his death 1730.

but popular story. If the queen's name, Welleta Georgis, could be substituted for Welled Georgis, it would appear, that Bacuffa was not very nice in his discrimination of words. Wellete is a daughter, and Welled a son, in Geez, and the difference is nearly as obvious as that between Joanna and John, in English. The manner in which the king is said to have discovered the merits of Waragna is not probable, particularly as it it is said to have happened in Begemder. Waragna was a Galla of great merit; but he certainly came from Maitsha, or Damot, to Gondar, in the bodies of guards which the king collected from these regions*.

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* At the time of Bacuffa's death, Welledaleoul was Bajerund or chamberlain, and Waragna was a Shalaka or captain of a regiment of Galla guards. Wushâ or Usho, the original name of Waragna, signifies "a dog," not in Galla but Amharic. Waragna means "a pretender to the crown;" a name which must have originated in some joke, for no Galla can be of the royal family.

YASOUS II. OR ADIAM SEGUED.

From 1729 to 1753.

Rebellion in the beginning of this Reign—King addicted to hunting—To building, and the Arts of Peace—Attacks Sennaar—Loses his Army—Takes Debra Samayat—Receives Baady, King of Sennaar, under his Protection.

BESIDES the queen, mother of Yasous, Bacuffa had several other wives, and children by them; none of whom, however, had any degree of interest, or many followers. Indeed, the temper of the king led him naturally to estrange himself from every intimate connection, that could pretend to any share with him in government. And this had gone so far, that he sent his wife, a favourite as she was, and his son Yasous, to the low, hot, and unwholesome province of Walkayt, the ordinary place to which state criminals were banished, in order that they might be under the eye of Ain Egzie, one of his confidential servants, and governor of that province. It is true this was done without any mark of disgust; and the queen returned immediately by his own command; but Yasous staid at Walkayt with Ain Egzie, till he was four

years old, without the king's having shewn any anxiety for his return.

The queen's first care was to call her relations to court *. Her brother, Welled de l'Oul, had been a favourite of the late king, and occupied, under him, a very considerable post in the palace. Geta, her second brother, was a man of slow parts, but esteemed a good soldier; being covetous, he was not a favour-

* In this account of the queen's relations, some difficulties occur, which are sufficiently perplexing. The 5th volume of the Abyssinian Annals gives a particular genealogy of the Iteghe, in four or five pages, before the history of Yasous. There can be no doubt of its authenticity, for many reasons; in particular, the modern date of the composition, and the certainty that it was written at the queen's desire, who surely knew her own kindred. As this genealogy differs in sundry respects from Mr Bruce's statement, it would appear he had omitted to consult this manuscript. The reader is here presented with an abstract of its contents.

The queen of Ethiopia, whose name will be long remembered as the patroness of Mr Bruce, was descended from Menas, the son of David III. in the following manner:

David had four sons; Claudius and Menas, who both ascended the throne; *Ayto* Jacob and *Ayto* Victor. David married his son Menas, when very young, to Selus-ayla, afterwards the Iteghe Adimas Mogass, daughter of the celebrated Robel *Shum* of *Bora* and *Sclawe*. The record says, that this was expressly done as a reward for bringing the king into league with the Franks (Portuguese). By her Menas had a son, Victor, and a daughter, Theodora. Victor died very young, and greatly lamented, leaving only one child, Nasihit, a girl, by a daughter of the Shum, or governor of Bed.

Nasahit bore to Za-christos, son of *Ras* Sertza, son of *Ras* Amdo, three sons; *Ayto* Læca Mariam, *Ayto* Severos, and *Ayto* Theodorus. Their country was Ganz.

Ayto Laeca Mariam had, by the daughter of Guebra-sion, *Amba-ras* of Saman and Waag, and *Shum* of Lasta and Zat, a girl, Keduste-Christos, who bore to a nobleman, of the name of

ite of the people, and less so of the king. The third was Eshte (pronounced, in that country, Shitti): he was amiable, liberal, affable, and brave, but rather given to indolence and pleasure, which alone hindered him from being a good statesman and general. He was a kind friend to strangers, a good master, and

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Welke-za-selasse, a son, Esdras, and a daughter, Christosawit, the great-grandmother of the Iteghe.

Christosawit had seven children to *Azage* Damo, son of Azage Meceflito of *Kuara* and of Ambasenet in Tigre. 1st, Ozoro Julian, a daughter: 2d, Azage Dane, a son; 3d, Ozoro Sabel, a daughter; 4th, *Kasmati* Busiris; 5th, Shalaka Bendolaeus; 6th, Ras Nicholaus; and, 7th, Ayto Iscander, four sons.

From the two sisters, Ozoro Julian and Ozoro Sabel, springs the affinity between the queen and Gueta, Eusebius, Eshte, &c.; which, as stated in the Chronicle, may be arranged in the following order:

Ozoro Julian, to Ayto Waka-christos of Bula and Fatigar, bore
1. Ozoro Mamet.
2. Ozoro Encoi, or Welleta-kedusan.
3. Kasmati Arkillidas.

Azage Dane had several sons;
1. Kasmati Mammo.
2. Amaius, &c. &c.

Ozoro Sabel, to one Ayto Sultan, bore
1. Ayto Marcorius.
2. Kasmati Gueta.
3. Ozoro Mamet.
4. Ozoro Enculale, &c.

Ozoro Encoi, to Kasmati Member, son of Ayto Teclahaimanout of Kuara-daga, bore
1. Ras Welled-Ieoul.
2. Welleta Georgis, or Berhan Mogass, the Queen.

Iyto Marcorius, by one Ozoro Birotawit, had
1. Ayto Ayo.
2. Kasmati Eusebius.
3. Kasmati Eshte.
4. Palambaras Mammo.
And two daughters.

placable enemy; stedfast to his promise, and, on all occasions, a lover of truth; a quality so very rare in Abyssinia, that it was said there had not been one, in this respect, like him, since the time of Yasous the Great. Notwithstanding this, Bacuffa liked him not,

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It appears, therefore, that the queen was related to Mammo Eshte and Eusebius, only in a distant degree. As to Gueta, it is uncertain whether he was the uncle of these three, or a younger man of the same name.

All these, and a number more, were called to court, after the death of Bacuffa, to support the queen. Ozoro Julian and Encoi, her mother and grandmother, had great influence there during the minority of Yasous. The whole body of relations formed a party, called the Kuaragna, at the head of which was Welled-Ieoul, the queen's only brother. It is probably in consequence of this political fraternization that Mr Bruce may have been led into a mistake; for Welled-Ieoul is often mentioned in the Ethiopic Annals, as being brother to the Iteghe; the names of the rest, though they occur in every page, never have that honour.

The children of Ras Welled-Ieoul, are next stated to be Fitaurari Shenu, or Sanuda, with many other sons and daughters

Kasmati Gueta had Melcole Werkit, a daughter; and Welled Aragawi, Ephrem, and Shema, sons.

Kasmati Eusebius had Guebra Medehin, Azage Welled Raphael, Confu, Sahina, and Engeda. Of these, Guebra Medehin and Confu are the worthless pair of brothers that robbed Mr Bruce, on his first journey to the sources.

Kasmati Eshte's children were, Engeda and Ayto Wushen, Shallu, and a girl, Sanait-Becoul, all-beautiful. Ayto Engeda and Ayto Aylo were the two greatest friends of Mr Bruce in Abyssinia.

The Queen's family is next enumerated. The beautiful wife of Bacuffa bore him only one child, Yasous, the succeeding king. After her husband's death, she was married to Gerasmati Yasous, a son of Ozoro Welleta Israel, daughter of Yasous the Great To him she bore, 1. Ozoro Welleta Israel, named after her grandmother; 2. Ozoro Esther; 3. Ozoro Altash.

This is the order they hold in the Chronicle, and I cannot but think it the order of their births. The name of the queen's second husband is different from that given by Mr Bruce.

Ozoro Welleta Israel was first married to Josedec, Kasmati of Damot, by whom she had Aylo; then to Gusha, Kasmati of Be-

as being too great a favourite of the people; and, for that reason, never gave him any employment.

The next brother was Eusebius, a very brave and skilful soldier, but rash, avaricious, passionate, and treacherous, and as great an enemy to truth as his brother Eshte was a friend to it. Bacuffa, upon some slight complaint, had resolved to put him to death; and, though he was dissuaded from this, he could never be so far reconciled to him, as ever to release him from prison. The fifth brother was Netcho, whom the desire of living at home, or, perhaps, a want of money to defray his expences at court, kept low and in obscurity all his lifetime. Yet he was a tried, gallant, and skilful soldier; and in later years, when I was at Gondar, was often praised as such by Ras Michael, the best judge, because the greatest general of his time; though, by reason of Netcho's private life, and absence from court, he never charged him with any important commission. Another brother was dead, and had left a son, called Mammo, a good horseman; the only quality, as far as I know, that he possessed, to which could justly be annexed the epithet of good.

Of these brothers, Geta and Netcho were alive in my time, Eshte was dead, but had left two sons, Ayto Engedan and Ayto Aylo, who were among the most intimate of my friends, from my entering Ethiopia till my leaving it; both were brave and good, and endowed with excellent qualities. Engedan, without

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gemder, son of Ras Wodage, to whom she had Hirat Yasous and Shallu.

Ozoro Esther had to Kasmati Netcho of Tcherkin, Confu Michael (in these Travels called Ayto Confu); and to Ymariam Barea, the unfortunate Kasmati of Begemder, Ayto Yasous, and Yasous Barea. Those to Ras Michael are not mentioned. Ozoro Altash had to Welled Hawaryat, the son of Michael Suhul, the Ras, a girl, Ozoro Ayabdar.

any allowance for his country, and want of education, was, I think, by very much, the most amiable and complete man that I have ever yet seen.

Shenuda, son of Welled de l'Oul, played a very considerable part in the revolution that happened in my time; was of a figure more than ordinary graceful; was brave, and did not want good dispositions; but these were obscured by his debauchery in wine and women, to which there were no bounds. Eusebius left two sons, both more worthless and profligate than himself, and both came to untimely ends. Guebra Mehedin, the eldest, was slain in a private quarrel at Lebec, by a near relation, Kasmati Ayabdar, after having robbed my servants, and plundered my baggage, in Foggora, near the village Dara; and the second, Ayto Confu, was killed in rebellion at the battle of Serbraxos, among the Begemder horse, fighting against his sovereign.

Mammo we shall find acting insignificant parts at times, never trusted, nor of consequence to any one. As for the queen herself, she was reputed the handsomest woman of her time. She was descended from a daughter of Victor, eldest brother to Menas, and son of David, who died without coming to the crown. This daughter was married to Robel, governor of Tigre, whose mother was a Portuguese; and the queen inherited the colour of her European ancestors; indeed was whiter than most Portuguese. She was very vain of this her descent; had a warm attachment to the Catholic religion in her heart, as far as she could ever learn it: Nor did she value herself less upon her beauty, as we may judge by the several names she took at diffreent times. The first was Iteghe Mantuab, or *the beautiful queen;* the second was Berhan Magwass, or the *the glory of grace;* though her Christian name was Welleta Georgis, as we have already observed.

After the death of her husband Bacuffa, she is said to have descended to a variety of attachments of short duration. She married a man of quality, Kasmati Netcho of Kuara, by whom she had three daughters. The first was Ozoro Esther, of whom I shall often speak, being, next to her mother, the greatest friend I had in Abyssinia, and one who had the most frequent opportunities of being so. She was married, in very early life, to Kasmati Netcho of Tcherkin, a man of great personal qualities, and who had a very large territory, reaching down to the Pagan blacks, or Troglodytes, called Shangalla.

This marriage was of very short duration. Netcho left one son, Ayto Confu, my very great and firm, though young, friend, who likewise inherited his father's fortune and virtues. She was afterwards married to Ayo Mariam Barea (excepting Ras Michael), reputed the best general in Abyssinia, but who died before I came into the country. By him she had one son and a daughter, infants. Lastly, she was married to Ras Michael, by whom she had two sons, the favourites of Michael's old age. Rustic and cruel as that old tyrant was, bred up in blood, and delighting in it, she governed him despotically, from the day of her marriage; yet so prudently, as to excite the envy of no one, excepting the murderers of her husband Mariam Barea, who, luckily, were also the constitutional enemies of her country.

The second daughter of the Iteghe was Ozoro Welleta Israel, the most beautiful woman in Abyssinia, with whom I had very little acquaintance, she being at constant war with Ras Michael. She had married a nobleman of the first consideration, to whom half of the large and rich province of Gojam belonged; by whom she had Aylo, one of the largest men that I ever saw; the only particular remarkable in him.

The third was Ozoro Altash, married to Welled

Hawaryat, Ras Michael's son, by whom she had three children, two sons and one daughter. One of them died of the small-pox soon after my arrival at Gondar; as did his father also; the other son and daughter happily recovered.

Bacuffa had provided sufficiently for the security of his provinces, by placing tried and veteran officers in his governments. Elias, indeed, was Ras and Betwudet at Gondar, and he was suspected of wishes contrary to his allegiance; but far before any, in the confidence of the late king, was Waragna Shalaka, that is, colonel of a regiment of Djawi Galla, with which he defended the provinces of Damot and Agow against his countrymen on the other side of the Nile; for he was a Galla of that nation himself; and his name was Usho, which signifies *a dog*. But it was more by his interest, which he preserved with those people, than by his arms, that he kept those barbarians from wasting that country.

The reader will easily remember, the first occasion of his coming to Gondar was when Bacuffa saw him washing his clothes in a pool of water *; and from the reproof, and his behaviour to the king on that occasion, as well as the duty and implicit obedience he paid to his commands afterwards, he was called Waragna, by way of contradiction; that word signifying a sturdy rebel, or one that stands up in defiance of the king. That name became much more famous afterwards in the person of his son, Waragna Fasil, to the very great detriment of the country in general.

The first thing the queen did, was to send Shalaka Waragna, and Billetana Gueta David, with a large body of Mahometan fusileers, Djawi and Toluma Gal-

* This alludes to a passage in the Author's life of Bacuffa, which is not given in its place in this edition, but may be found in a succeeding volume.—E.

la, to guard the mountain of Wechne, where the males of the royal family were imprisoned, that no competitor might be released from thence. The next step was to marry Ozoro Welleta Tecla Haimanout, the daughter of Bacuffa, to Ras Elias, to confirm him, if possible, in his much suspected allegiance. After which, the Ras, judges, and soldiers of the king's household, made this proclamation: "Bacuffa, king of kings, is dead! Yasous, king of kings, liveth! Mourn for those that are dead, and rejoice with those that are alive!" Orders were then given for burying Bacuffa with all magnificence possible.

The first thing that seemed the beginning of trouble in the new regency, and likely to destroy the calm that had hitherto subsisted, was an information given by Azage Georgis against Tecla Saluce, a great officer at court. Georgis accused him before the king and council, that he had been heard to say, that king Yasous was dangerously ill. Tecla Saluse absolutely denied this charge, and said it was an invention of his enemy Georgis, and challenged him to prove it. Evidence being called, he was convicted in the most direct and satisfactory manner; was therefore condemned to death, and hewn to pieces at the king's gate that same day by the common soldiers.

Here is a species of treason without any overt act. The imagining of the king's death, which seems much to resemble the law of England, may be defended from the importance of the case, but scarcely from any principle of justice or reason.

It soon appeared that a conspiracy had been on foot; several great men fled from court, among whom was Johannes, who had the charge of the king's horses. But Shalaka Waragna and Billetana Gueta David, being sent immediately after him, this conspiracy was soon stifled, and the ringleaders dispersed, mostly in-

to Amhara, where they were taken prisoners by Woodage, governor of the province, and sent to the king. Johannes, finding it impossible to escape, took to one of those papyrus boats used in navigating the lake Tzana; and, being driven by the wind, landed in an island belonging to the queen, where he was taken prisoner, with his wife and family, and delivered up, on condition that he should not be put to death.

Kasmati Cambi, returning from Damot, fell accidentally upon Palambaras Masmari, and several others, and brought them prisoners to Gondar. A council was thereupon held, and the conspirators put upon their trial. Palambaras Masmari, and Abou Barea, who was one of the judges, were condemned to be hanged on the tree before the palace-gate. Johannes and the rest were committed to close prison, in the hands of the Betwudet.

It was thought a proper expedient to check these disorders, to hasten the coronation of the king, though very young. The judges, and all the officers, being assembled in the presence-chamber, where the king sits on his throne (for in the council-chamber he sits in a kind of cage, or close balcony, where no part of him is discovered), Sarach Masseri Mammo, whose office it was, stood up with the Kees Hatze, or king's almoner; when this last had anointed him with oil, Mammo placed the crown upon his head; upon which the whole assembly, his mother only excepted, fell down and paid him homage; and at his inauguration he took the name of Adiam Segued.

On a separate throne, on his right hand, sat the queen mother. She, too, was crowned, though not anointed; but the same homage was performed to her that had been done to the king, who sat on the

throne with his head covered; nor did the Abuna interfere, nor was his attendance judged any part of the ceremony *.

The first seeds of discontent had been sown in Damot, where a party of rebels had attacked Kasmati Cambi in the night, cut most of his army to pieces, and obliged Shalaka Job to fly into Gojam, and then return in haste to Gondar.

The king found no better remedy against this rebellion, than to appoint Kasmati Waragna governor of Damot, and Sanuda guardian of Wechne, with orders to take with him a son of the late Oustas the usurper, and confine him with the king's sons upon that mountain. At the same time he appointed Ayo governor of Begemder; both these preferments being much to the satisfaction of the whole nation. Waragna, knowing the necessities of his province, marched from Gondar with what forces he could collect, and took up his head quarters at Samseen; where, on the very night after his arrival, he was set upon by Tenso Mammo at the head of the Agows. However unexpected this was, Waragna, a good soldier, was not to be taken by surprise. He knew the country, and had not a great opinion, either of the force or courage of the enemy, or capacity of their general. Presenting, therefore, only one-half of his troops, which could not be easily discovered in the dark, he sent Fit-Auraris Tamba to make a small compass, and fall upon their rear with the other half. Mammo's troops, thinking this to be a fresh and separate army, immediately took to flight, and were many of them slain, after leaving behind them their tents, baggage, and the greatest part of their fire-arms, which had been of very little service to them in the dark.

* The queen was not called Itoghe before this ceremony.

Waragna, who knew the consequence of his province was the riches of it, and the dependence the capital had upon it for constant supplies of provisions, was loth to pursue his victory farther, if any means could be fallen upon to bring about a pacification. To effect this, he dispatched messengers to his friends, the Galla, on the other side of the Nile, ordering them to be ready to pass the river on the day he should appoint, and to lay waste the country of the Agows with fire and sword. He then decamped with his army from Samseen, and marched to Sacala, and took up his head-quarters in St Michael's church, where he found the Agows in the utmost terror from the apprehension of being over-run with barbarians. But he soon eased them of their fears by a proclamation, in which he told them plainly, that it was owing to the goodness of the country, and not any merit in the people, that the king's palace and capital was so plentifully supplied with provisions from thence; that all his pursuit was peace, but that he was resolved to effect that end by every possible means; therefore the time was now come that they were to make a resolution, and abide by it, to submit and behave peaceably as good citizens ought; or, when his army of Galla joined him, he would extirpate them to the last man. In the mean time, he published an amnesty of all that had passed.

The Agows knew well that they were in the hands of one who was no trifler, nor in his heart much their friend. They ran to him, ready to make that composition which he should raise from them for their past transgressions, and his future protection. The tribute laid upon them for both was moderate beyond all expectation, 2000 oxen for the king and queen, and 500 for himself; upon which he left Sacala, and entered

Goutto, a very fertile country, between Maitsha and the Agows, where he used the same moderation, and by these means quieted and reconciled his whole province.

Nothing could have been more advantageous to the king's affairs than the prudent conduct of this wise officer, which left him at liberty to afford him his assistance: for in the mean time a conspiracy was formed at Gondar, which had taken deep root, and had a powerful faction; Elias, late Ras and Betwudet, Tensa Mammo, Guebra l'Oul, Matteos, and Agne, all principal men in Gondar, and possessed of great riches and dependencies throughout the whole kingdom.

On the 8th of December 1734, being joined by their followers from without, they all rendezvoused upon the river Kahha, below the town. After holding council in the king's house which is there, they resolved to proclaim one of the princes upon the mountain Wechne, named Hezekias, king. For this purpose, furnished with a kettle-drum, they marched in three divisions, by three different ways, to the palace, avowedly with an intention to force the gates, and murder the king and queen. But Fit-Auraris Ephraim, having intelligence of this tumult, first shut up and obstructed all the entrances to the king's house, then gave advice to Billetana Gueta Welled de l'Oul, of the rebellion of Tensa Mammo, his design to murder the king, and his having proclaimed Hezekias.

These immediately repaired to the king's house to take council together what was to be done, and to defend the place if it was necessary. The rebels were now drawn up, and were beating their kettle-drum to make their proclamation, "Hezekias was king!" while Shalaka Tchinsho, a young nobleman of great hopes,

who commanded the troops in the court where was the outer gate, impatient to hear an usurper proclaimed in the very face of his sovereign, directed the outer court gate to be opened, and, with two bodies of Galla, Djawi and Toluma, and several corps of lances, which compose the king's household, however inferior in number, he rushed upon the rebels so suddenly, that they were soon obliged to think of other occupation.

The first that fell was Asaleffi Lensa, who stood by the drum, and was slain by Shalaka Tchinsho with his own hand; his drum taken and sent to the king as the first fruits of the day. The soldiers, encouraged by the example of their leader, fell fiercely upon the rebels, dispersed and broke through them wherever they saw the greatest number together; a great slaughter was made, and Tensa Mammo with difficulty escaped. The victory, indeed, would have been complete, had not an accidental shot, from a distance, wounded Shalaka Tchinsho mortally. His own people carried him within the gates of the palace, where he gloriously expired at the feet of his sovereign.

The rebels, notwithstanding this check, increased every day in number and resolution, when the news arrived that Waragna had composed all the differences in Damot, Agow, and Goutto, and, at the head of a numerous army, was waiting the king's orders. This intelligence first had the effect to disconcert the rebels, who suddenly left the capital in their way to Wechne.

The king, now master of Gondar, ordered a proclamation to be made for all persons whatever, holding fiefs of the crown, as also all others, to assemble before him on a certain day, when the Itchegue and Abuna, holding the picture of our Saviour with the

crown of thorns *, up before the people, administered to them a solemn oath, to live and die with the king and Iteghe; a feeble experiment, often tried by a weak government. The only consequence of this was a present expence to the crown in a distribution of beef, honey, butter, wheat, and all kinds of provisions; after which each man returned to his house, ready to repeat the perjury ten times a day for the same emolument, and with the same sincerity.

Messengers were next dispatched to Kasmati Waragna, ordering him to come to Gondar with the greatest force he could raise. The same day Azage Kyrillos, whom the king had made governor of Wechne, and Azage Newaia Sclasse, went to the mountain, pretending that king Yasous was dead, and that the choice of the principal members of government had fallen upon Hezekias, who thereupon was delivered to them, and saluted king; and, without losing time, they marched to Kahha, and encamped on that river below Gondar.

In the meanwhile, the great men and officers of the court, and in particular those who had estates and houses in Gondar, began to consider the danger of the town at the so near approach of the rebels. Several districts, or streets, situated on eminences, by shutting up access to them, were made tenable posts; and, having filled them with good soldiers, they set about the defence of the town and annoying the enemy. Hezekias had removed to the house of Basha Arkillidas; and it was agreed to send their whole forces to see if they could succeed in forcing the king's house. But before this, another stratagem was tried to alienate the

* A relict of the most precious kind, believed to have come from Jerusalem, and to have been painted by St Luke.

minds of the people of Gondar from their sovereign. It was said that certain Roman Catholic priests had arrived at Gondar; that they were shut up privately in the palace with the king and queen; and, upon the Abuna and Itchegue coming to Hezekias to ask him how he happened to be proclaimed king, without making to them some confession of his faith (a question they put to all young or weak princes), Hezekias answered, It was because he had heard the Itchegue, and the rest of the clergy, seemed to be careless about the true faith, by suffering Catholic priests to live with the king in the palace. A great ferment immediately followed; all the monks, priests, and madmen that could be assembled (and on these occasions they gather quickly), with the Itchegue and Abuna at their heads, went to Dippabye, the open place before the palace, and pronounced the Iteghe, Yasous, and all their abettors, accursed and given up to burn with Dathan and Abiram.

For several days and nights attempts were made to set fire to, and break open the gate. But the loyalists charged them so vigorously upon all these occasions, especially Billetana Gueta Welled de l'Oul; and the walls of the palace were so exceedingly thick and strong, that little progress was made in proportion to the men these attempts cost daily. However, on that side of the palace called Adenaga, the rebels had lodged themselves so near as to set part of it on fire.

The king's house in Gondar stands in the middle of a square court, which may be fully an English mile in circumference. In the midst of it is a square tower, in which there are many noble apartments. A strong double wall surrounds it, and this is joined by a platform roof; loop holes, and conveniences for discharging missile weapons, are disposed all around it. The whole tower and wall is built of stone and lime; but

part of the tower being demolished and laid in ruins, and part of it let fall for want of repair, small apartments, or houses of one story, have been built in different parts of the area, or square, according to the fancy of the prince then reigning; and these go now by the names of the ancient apartments in the palace, which are fallen down.

These houses are composed of the frail materials of the country, wood and clay, thatched with straw, though, in the inside, they are all magnificently lined, or furnished. They have likewise magnificent names, which we have mentioned already. These people, barbarous as they are, have always had a great taste for magnificence and expence. All around them was silver, gold, and brocade, before the Adelan war, in which they lost the commerce of that country, by losing their connection with India *.

The next night the soldiers of Elias made their lodgments so near the walls, that, with fiery arrows, they set one of these houses, called "Werk Sacala," within the square, in flames; but Welled de l'Oul, with the Toluma Galla, sallying at that instant, surprised Elias's soldiers, not expecting such interruption, and put the greatest part of them to the sword, setting on fire the houses that were near the palace, till part was entirely burnt to the ground. The next night, an attempt was made upon the gate to blow it up with gunpowder; but, before it was completed, the two rebels employed in the work were shot dead from the wall, and their train miscarried.

On the 25th of December they burned a new house

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* The truth of this is amply illustrated by the MS. account of the court, camp, royal treasury, &c. in the Annals of Abyssinia, Vol. II.—E.

in the town built by the king, called Riggobee Bet. These frequent fires had turned the minds of people in general against the waragna, or pretender, Hezekias. The night after, there was another great fire in the king's house; Zeffan Bet, and another large building, were destroyed by the rebels, as was the church of St Raphael. Gondar looked like a town that had been taken by an enemy, and battles were every day fought in the streets, with no decisive advantage to either party. Some part of the town was on fire every night; nobody knew for what reason, nor what was the quarter that was next to be burnt.

In the mean time, Azage Georgis arrived at Basil Bet, in the country of the Agows, where Waragna was, and delivered him the king's order, that he should make all possible haste to his assistance at Gondar, with as large an army as he could suddenly bring; and these dispatches conferred upon him at the same time, as a mark of favour, the post of Ibaba Azage, or governor of Ibaba, together with Elmana and Densa, two districts inhabited by Galla, subjects to the king, which posts were then held by Tensa Mammo, and forfeited by his rebellion.

The next morning Waragna left his head-quarters at Basil Bet; thence he marched to Gumbali, and thence to Sima. At Sima he heard, that, the day before, it had been proclaimed at Ibaba, by orders of Tensa Mammo, that Yasous was dead, and Hezekias was now king; upon this intelligence he marched from Sima, and, while it was yet early in the day, he came to Ibaba.

The first inquiry was concerning the Shum (or chief of the town) left there by Tensa Mammo; and this man, coming readily to him to receive his commands, and offer him any service in his power, was asked by whose orders the proclamation of Hezekias was made?

Being answered, by Tensa Mammo's, he directed the Shum and his two sons to be hanged on three separate trees in the middle of the town; the Shum with the nagareet round his neck which had served in the proclamation of Hezekias; he then declared Tensa Mammo a rebel and outlaw, and confiscated his estate to the king's use.

At Ibaba he met Fit-Auraris Tamba, with a large body of Damots and Djawi; then he decamped from Ibaba, and, at the bridge over the Nile, was met by Azage Georgis, with all Maitsha, Elmana, and Densa following, and thence proceeded to Waira, where he set Arkillidas at liberty. This officer, after distinguishing himself before all others in the king's defence, had been taken prisoner by Tensa Mammo, and sent thither. Advancing into Foggora, with a large army, he halted at Gilda, and sent some soldiers on the road to Gondar, to see if he could apprehend any travellers, especially those going or coming to or from market. But, after three days waiting on the road, the soldiers returned without any person or intelligence, by which he judged the town was already in great straits. In two days after, he advanced to Wainarab, and thence he sent his Fit-Auraris forward to set a house at Tedda on fire, to shew to the king at Gondar that he was thus far advanced to his assistance. This barbarous custom of burning a house wherever an army encamps, though but for an hour, is invariably practised, as a signal by armies, throughout all Abyssinia.

At this time there was a treaty begun between the king and Tensa Mammo. The rebels, weary of the little advantage they had gained, and hearing Waragna was about to march against them, offered the queen her own terms, provided she published a general amnesty, and that each man should be allowed to keep

the posts he had before the rebellion. The queen, weary and terrified with war, readily agreed to this proposal; and this facility, instead of accelerating the treaty, gave the rebels an opportunity of asking further terms, and a settlement was spoken of for king Hezekias, in some of the low provinces near Walkayt.

Welled de l'Oul, the queen's brother, a man in whom the rebels had trust, seconded his sister's desire, and carried on the treaty, but from different motives. It was his opinion, that, to make peace with the rebels, leaving their party unbroken, was to spread the infection of rebellion all over the kingdom; and to let them keep their posts, was leaving a sword in their hands to enable them to defend themselves on any future occasion. He therefore thought, that, as the king had now Waragna at his command, they should make use of him to pluck up this rebellion by the roots, cut off all the ringleaders, and disperse the faction; but, in the mean time, in order to be able to effect this, they should keep up the appearance of being anxious for agreeing, in order to lull the enemy asleep, till Waragna made his instructions and designs known to the king.

From Wainarab, Waragna sent a messenger to let the king and queen know of his arrival; and with him came Arkillidas, that no doubt might remain of the truth of the message. This officer told the king, that Waragna would advance to Tedda, and offer the rebels battle there; but if they retired (as he heard they intended) to Abra, he would follow them thither. He desired the king also to issue his orders to the several shums to guard the roads, that as few of the ringleaders of the rebels might escape as possible.

Hezekias, with his army, decamped, taking the road to Woggora; and Waragna, following him, came up

with him at Fenter, on January 20th, 1735. The rebels, inferior in number, though they did not wish an engagement at that time, were too high-minded to avoid it when offered. Both armies fought a long time with equal fortune; and though Waragna at the first onset had slain two men with his own hands, and taken two prisoners, the battle was supported with great firmness till the evening, when Waragna ordered all his Galla, the men of Maitsha, Elmana, and Densa, to leave their horses, and charge the enemy on foot. This confident step, unknown and unpractised by Galla before, had the desired effect. The Galla now fought desperately for life, not for victory, being deprived of their only means of saving themselves by flight.

Most of the principal officers among the rebels being killed or wounded, their army at last was broken, and took to flight. Hezekias was surrounded and taken, fighting bravely; being first hurt in the leg, and then beat off his horse with a stone. The pursuit was presently stayed. Tensa Mammo escaped safely through Woggora, a disaffected province; and had now passed the Tacazze, when he was taken by the men of Sire, and brought to the king, for the reward that had been offered by Waragna for his head.

Hezekias was brought to his trial before the king, nor did he presume to deny his guilt. He was therefore sentenced to die, and committed to close prison. Tensa Mammo was arraigned, and, although he confessed the treason, he pleaded the peace he had made with the king before the arrival of Waragna at Gondar. This plea was unanimously over-ruled by the judges, because the treaty had not been completed. He was, therefore, sentenced to die, and immediately carried out to the daroo-tree before the palace, and

hanged between two of his most confidential counsellors.

The Abuna and Itchegue were next ordered to appear, and answer for the crime of high treason in excommunicating the king. They declared they proceeded on no other grounds than an information, that the king and queen were turned Franks, and had two Catholic priests with them in the palace. The men complained of were produced, and proved to be two Greeks; Petros, a native of Rhodes, and Demetrius. This explanation being given, the Abuna and Itchegue thereupon asked pardon of the king and queen, and were ordered to make their recantation at Dippabye, which they immediately did, declaring they were wrong, and had proceeded on false information.

On the 28th of January Sanuda and Adero were ordered to carry king Hezekias to Wechne, which they did, and left him there, without disfiguring him in any part of his body, the cruel, but usual custom in such cases. Both the Iteghe and her son were of the most merciful disposition; and the general reputation they had for this was often the cause of tumults and rebellions that would not have risen in severer reigns.

Not long after this appeared a very unexpected pretender to the crown. He said he was the old king Bacuffa; that he had given it out that he was dead, for political reasons, and was come again to claim his crown and kingdom. Never was resurrection so little wished for as this; a violent fear fell upon part of the multitude for some time; but his name making no party, whether true or false, he was seized upon without bloodshed, tried, and condemned to die. This punishment was changed into one of a supposed gentler kind, the cutting off his leg, and sending him to Wechne. The operation, always performed in the

grossest manner by an axe, high up the leg, and near the knee, is generally fatal; for there is no one, having either skill or care, to take up the ends of the veins and arteries separated by the amputation; they only apply useless styptics and bandages, of no effect, till the patient bleeds to death. This is the common case; so that the pretended Bacuffa died, in consequence of the operation, before he came to Wechne, though he was by his sentence reprieved from death.

The king, now arrived at the seventh year of his reign, proclaimed a general hunt, which is a declaration of his near approach to manhood; but he pursued it to no length, and again returned to Gondar.

At that time, a great party of the queen's relations was made against Ayo, governor of Begemder. It began by a competition between Kasmati Geta, the queen's brother, and Ayo, who should have that province. The common voice was for Ayo, not only as a man of the greatest interest in the province, but in all respects unexceptionable throughout the kingdom. Welled de l'Oul, (brother to Geta) however, being now Ras and Betwudet, Geta governor of Samen, Eusebius and all the rest of them in high places at court, Geta was preferred to the government of Begemder. Ayo, though avowedly a good subject of the king, was determined not to be made a sacrifice to a party. He therefore refused to resign his government, and prepared to defend himself.

Upon this, Adero, governor of Gojam, with the whole forces of that province, passed the Nile, and entered Begemder; Geta on the side of Samen, and last of all Welled de l'Oul marched with a royal army to join the forces that had already begun to lay waste the country, where unusual excesses were committed. Ayo's house was burned to the ground; so were all those of his party, and their lands destroyed, greatly

to the general damage of the province and capital. Ayo was now obliged to save himself by flight. It was said, that the king (though his army was ready) refused to march against Ayo; but with a party of his own set out for Aden, on the frontiers of Sennaar, to hunt there; nor did he return till the executions were over in Begemder.

Adero fell back to Gojam, and Welled de l'Oul to Gondar soon after. The king himself appeared very much contented with his own expedition, in which he had shown great dexterity and bravery, having killed two young elephants, and a gomari, or hippopotamus, with his own hands. Nor did he stay any time at Gondar, or make any preferments, the usual consequence of victories, but prepared again for another hunting expedition, or an attack upon the Shangalla. The queen and Welled de l'Oul opposed strongly his resolution. But Yasous seemed to be weary of being governed. He was fast advancing to manhood, and of a disposition rather forward for his age. His expedition against the Shangalla was attended with no accident; and he returned to Gondar on the 3d of June, with a number of slaves, much better pleased that he had neglected, rather than taken, his mother's advice.

On the 23d day of December, Yasous again set out on another hunting party, and killed two elephants and a rhinoceros. He then proceeded to Tchelga, from Tchelga to Waldubba; and thence to the rivers Gandova and Shimfa. These are two rivers we shall have occasion frequently to speak of in our return through Sennaar, in which kingdom the one is called Dender, the other Rahad. Here he amused himself with a very violent species of hunting, that of forcing the gieratacachin, which means long-tail; it is otherwise called giraffa in Arabic. It is the

tallest of beasts; I never saw it dead, nor, I think, more than twice alive, and then at a distance. It is, however, often killed by the elephant hunters. Its skin is beautifully variegated when young, but turns brown when arrived at any age. It is, I apprehend, the camelopardalis, and is the only animal, they say, that, in swiftness, will beat a horse in the fair field.

It was not with a view to hunt only, that Yasous made these frequent excursions towards the frontiers of Sennaar. His resolution was formed (as it appeared soon after) in imitation of his forefather Socinios, to revive his right over the country of the Shepherds, his ancient vassals, who, since the accession of strength by uniting with the Arabs, had forgot their ancient tribute and subjection, as we have already observed.

The king, in five days marching from Gidara, came to a station of the Daveina, which is a tribe of shepherds, by much the strongest of any in Atbara. He fell into their encampments a little before the dawn of day. The first shew they made was that of resistance, till they had got their horses and camels saddled; they then all fled, after the king had killed three of them with his own hand. Ras Woodage signalized himself likewise by having slain the same number with the king. The cattle, women, and provisions fell all into the king's hand, and were driven off to Gondar. Their arrival gave the town an entertainment to which they had a long time been strangers. Many thousand camels were assembled in the plain, where stands the palace of Kahha (upon a river of that name); large flocks of horned cattle, of extraordinary beauty, were also brought from Atbara, which the king ordered to be distributed among his soldiers and the priests of Gondar, and such of the officers of state as had been necessarily detained on account of the police, and had not followed the army.

In this year, 1736, there happened a total eclipse of the sun, which very much affected the minds of the weaker sort of people. The dreamers and prophets were everywhere let loose, full of the lying spirit which possessed them, to foretel that the death of the king, and the downfal of his government were at hand, and that deluges of civil blood were then to be spilt both in the capital and provinces. There was not, indeed, at the time, any circumstance that warranted such a prediction, or any thing likely to be more fatal to the state, than the expenditure of the large sums of money to which the turn the king had taken subjected him.

He had built a large and very costly church at Koscam, and he was still engaged in a more expensive work, in the building of a palace at Gondar. He was also rebuilding his house at Riggobēe-ber (the north end of the town), which had been demolished by the rebels; and had begun a very large and expensive villa at Azazo, with extensive groves, or gardens, planted thick with orange and lemon trees, upon the banks of a beautiful and clear river, which divides the palace from the church of Tecla Haimanout, a large edifice, which, some time before, he had also built and endowed. Besides all these occupations, he was deeply engaged in ornamenting his palace at Gondar. A rebellion, massacre, or some such misfortune, had happened among the Christians at Smyrna; who coming to Cairo, and finding that city in a still less peaceable state than the one which they had left, they repaired to Jidda in their way to India; but missing the monsoon, and being destitute of money and necessaries, they crossed over the Red Sea for Masuah, and came to Gondar. There were twelve of them silver smiths, very excellent in that fine work called filigrane, who were all received very readily by the

king, liberally furnished both with necessaries and luxuries, and employed in his palace as their own taste directed them.

By the hands of these, and several Abyssinians whom they had taught, sons of Greek artists, whose fathers were dead, he finished his presence-chamber in a manner truly admirable. The skirting, which in our country is generally of wood, was finished with ivory four feet from the ground. Over this were three rows of mirrors from Venice, all joined together, and fixed in frames of copper, or cornices gilt with gold. The roof, in gaiety and taste, corresponded perfectly with the magnificent finishing of the room; it was the work of the Falasha, and consisted of painted cane, split and disposed in Mosaic figures, which produces a gayer effect than it is possible to conceive. This chamber, indeed, was never perfectly finished, from a want of mirrors. The king died; taste decayed; the artists were neglected, or employed themselves in ornamenting saddles, bridles, swords, and other military ornaments, for which they were very ill paid; part of the mirrors fell down; part remained till my time; and I was present when the last of them were destroyed, on a particular occasion, after the battle of Serbraxos, as will be mentioned hereafter.

The king had begun another chamber of equal expence, consisting of plates of ivory, with stars of all colours stained in each plate at proper distances. This, too, was going to ruin; little had been done in it but the alcove in which he sat, and little of it was seen, as the throne and person of the king concealed it.

Yasous was charmed with this multiplicity of works and workmen. He gave himself up to it entirely; he even wrought with his own hand, and rejoiced at seeing the facility with which, by the use of a compass

and a few straight lines, he could produce the figure of a star equally exact with any of his Greeks. Bounty followed bounty. The best villages, and those near the town, were given in property to the Greeks, that they might recreate themselves, but at a distance always liable to his call, and with as little loss of time as possible. He now renounced his favourite hunting matches and incursions upon the Shangalla and Shepherds of Atbara.

The extraordinary manner in which the king employed his time soon made him the object of public censure. Pasquinades began to be circulated throughout the capital; one in particular, a large roll of parchment, intituled "The expeditions of *Yasous the Little.*" The king in reality was a man of short stature: The Ethiopic word Tannush, joined to the king's name, Yasous El Tannush, applied both to his stature and actions. So Tallac, the name given to another Yasous, his predecessor, signified great in capacity and atchievement, as well as that he was of a large and masculine person.

These expeditions, though ennumerated in a large sheet of parchment, were confined to a very few miles; from Gondar to Kahha, from Kahha to Koscam, from Koscam to Azazo, from Azazo to Gondar, from Gondar to Koscam, from Koscam to Azazo, and so on. It was a similar piece of ridicule upon his father, Philip, as we are informed, that, in the last century, cost Don Carlos, prince of Spain, his life.

This satire provoked Yasous exceedingly; and, to wipe off the imputation of inactivity and want of ambition, he prepared for an expedition against Sennaar. It was not, however, one of those inroads into Atbara upon the Arabs and Shepherds, whom the Funge had conquered and made tributary to them; but a regular campaign with a royal army, aimed directly at the very vitals of the monarchy of Sennaar, the capital of

the Funge, and at the conquest or extirpation of those strangers entirely from Atbara.

We have seen, in the course of this history, that these two kingdoms, Abyssinia and Funge, had been on very bad terms during several of the last reigns; and that personal affronts and slights had passed between the contemporary princes themselves. Baady, son of L'Oul, who succeeded his father in the year 1733, had been distinguished by no exploits worthy of a king, but daily stained with acts of treachery and cruelty unworthy of a man. No intercourse had passed between Yasous and Baady during their respective reigns; there was no war declared, nor peace established, nor any sort of treaty subsisting between them.

Yasous, without any previous declaration, and without any provocation, at least as far as is known, raised a very numerous and formidable army, and gave the command of it to Ras Welled de l'Oul; to whom Kasmati Waragna was appointed fit-auraris. The king commanded a chosen body of troops, separate from the rest of the army, which was to act as a reserve, or as occasion should require, in the pitched battle. This he ardently wished for, and had figured to himself that he was to fight against Baady in person. Yasous, from the moment he entered the territory of Sennaar, gave his soldiers the accustomed licence he always had indulged them with, when marching through an enemy's country; nor knew he, in these circumstances, what was meant by mercy; all that had the breath of life was sacrificed by the sword, and the fire consumed the rest.

An universal terror spread around him down to the heart of Atbara. The Shepherds and Arabs, as many as could fly, dispersed themselves in the woods, which, all the way from the frontiers of Abyssinia to

the river Dender, are very thick, and in some places almost impenetrable. Some of the Arabs, either from affection or fear, joined Yasous in his march; among these was Nile Wed Ageeb, their prince; others, taking courage, gathered, and made a stand at the Dender, to try their fortune, and give their cattle time to pass the Nile; and then, if defeated, they were to follow them. Kasmati Waragna (as fit auraris,) joined by the king, no sooner came up with these Arabs on the banks of the Dender, than he fell furiously upon them, broke and dispersed them with a considerable slaughter; then leaving Ras Welled de l'Oul with the king, and the main body to encamp, taking advantage of the confusion the defeat of the Arabs had occasioned, he advanced by a forced march to the Nile, to take a view of the town of Sennaar.

Baady had assembled a very large army on the other side of the river, and was preparing to march out of Sennaar; but, terrified at the king's approach, the defeat of the Arabs, and the velocity with which the Abyssinians advanced, he was about to change his resolution, abandon Sennaar, and retire north into Atbara.

There is a small kingdom, or principality, called Dar Fowr, all inhabited by negroes, far in the desert west of Sennaar, joining with two other petty negro states like itself, still farther westward, called Sele and Bagirma, while to the eastward it joins with Kordofan, formerly a province of Dar Fowr, but conquered from it by the Funge.

Hamis, prince of Dar Fowr, having been banished from his country in a late revolution occasioned by an unsuccessful war against Sele and Bagirma, had fled to Sennaar, where he had been received kindly by Baady, and it was by his assistance the Funge had subdued Kordofan. This prince, a gallant soldier,

could not bear to see the green standard of his prophet Mahomet flying before an army of Christians; and, being informed of the king's march and separation from the main body nearly as soon as it happened, he proposed to Baady, that, as an allurement to Yasous to pass the river with only the troops he had with him, he should do from prudence what he resolved to do from fear, and fall back behind Sennaar, leaving it to Yasous to enter; but, in the mean time, that he should dispatch him with 4000 of his best horse, armed with coats of mail, to pass the Nile at a known place below, on the right of Welled de l'Oul, on whom he should fall by surprise, and, if lucky enough to defeat him, as was probable, he would then close upon Yasous's rear, which would of necessity either oblige him to surrender, or lose his life and army in attempting to repass the river between the two Nubian armies. This counsel, for many reasons, was perfectly agreeable to Baady, who instantly fell back from covering Sennaar, and then detached Hamis to make a circuit out of sight, and cross the Nile as proposed.

In the mean time, Yasous advanced to Basboch, where he found the current too rapid, and the river too deep for his infantry. He dispatched, therefore, a messenger to Welled de l'Oul for a reinforcement of horse, and gave his infantry orders to retire to the main body upon the arrival of the reinforcement of cavalry. This resolution he had taken upon advancing higher up the river from Basboch, till opposite to the town of Sennaar, and when divided only from it by the Nile. He there saw the confusion that reigned in that large town. No preparation for resistance being visible, the cries of women at the sight of an enemy so near them, and the hurry of the men deserting their habitation loaded with the most valu-

ble of their effects, all increased the king's impatience to put himself in possession of this capital of his enemy.

It happened that an Arab, belonging to Nile Wed Ageeb, had seen the manœuvre of Hamis and his cavalry. This man, crossing the Nile at the nearest ford, came and told his master, Wed Ageeb, what he had seen, who informed the king of his danger. Upon interrogating the Arab, it was found that the affair of Welled de l'Oul would certainly be over before the king could possibly join him; and in that case he must fall in the midst of a victorious army, and his destruction must then be inevitable, if he attempted it. It was therefore agreed, as the only means possible to save the king and that part of the army, he had with him, to retreat in the route Shekh Nile should indicate to them; marching up with the river Nile close on the right hand, and leaving the desert between that and the Dender, which is absolutely without water, to cover their left. This was executed as soon as resolved.

In the mean time, Hamis had crossed the Nile, and continued his march with the utmost diligence, and, in the close of the evening, had fallen upon Welled de l'Oul as unexpectedly as he could have wished. The Abyssinians were everywhere slaughtered and trodden down, before they could prepare themselves for the least resistance. All that could fly sheltered themselves in the woods: but this refuge was as certain death as the sword of the Funge; for, after leaving the river Dender, all the country behind them was perfectly destitute of water. Ras Welled de l'Oul, and some other principal officers, under the direction of some faithful Arabs, escaped, and, with much difficulty, two days after, joined the king.

Besides these, the army, consisting of 18,000 men, either perished by the sword, by thirst, or were taken prisoners. All the sacred reliques, which the Abyssinians carry about with their armies to ensure victory, and avert misfortune; the picture of the crown of thorns, called *sele quarat rasou;* pieces of the true cross; a crucifix that had on many occasions spoke (but should ever after be dumb, since it spoke not on that day); all these treasures of priestcraft were taken by the Funge, and carried in triumph to Sennaar. Great part of those Arabs, who had joined the king in his march northward, had now quitted him, and attached themselves to the pursuit of the fugitive remains of Welled de l'Oul's army. As these Arabs were those that lived nearest the Abyssinian frontier, and to whom the king had done no harm, because, they had mostly joined him, no sooner was he informed of their treachery, but just arrived in their country, and scarcely out of danger from the pursuit of the Funge, Yasous turned short to the left, destroying with fire and sword all the families of those that had forsaken him, and so continued to do till arrived on the banks of the Tacazze.

The Arabs and shepherds there, many of whom had just returned from the destruction of Welled de l'Oul's army at Sennaar, and were now rejoicing their families with the news of so complete a victory, and that all danger from the Christians was over, were astonished to see Yasous at the head of a fresh and vigorous army, burning and destroying their country, and committing all sort of devastation, when they thought him long ago dead, or fugitive, and skulking, half-famished, on the banks of the Dender.

The king returned in this manner to Gondar, carrying more the appearance of a conqueror than one who had suffered the loss of a whole army, his sol-

diers being loaded with the spoils of the Arabs, and multitudes of cattle driven before them. It was but too visible, however, by the countenances of many, how wide a difference there was between the loss and the acquisition.

It was, indeed, not from the presence or behaviour of the king, nor yet from his discourse, that it could be learned any misfortune had befallen him. On the contrary, he affected greater gaiety than usual, when talking of the expedition; and said publicly, and laughing, one day, as he arose from council, "Let all those, who are not pleased with the song of Koscam, sing that of Sennaar." From this many were of opinion, that he enjoyed a kind of malevolent pleasure from the misfortune which had befallen his army, who, not content with seeing him cultivate and enjoy the arts of peace, had urged him to undertake a war of which there was no need, and for which there was no provocation given, though in it there was every sort of danger to be expected.

Although Yasous gave no consolation to his people, the priests and fanatics soon endeavoured to supply this defect. Tensa Mammo arrived from Sennaar with the crown of thorns, the true cross, and all the rest of that precious merchandise, safe and entire, only a little profaned by the bloody hands of the Moors. Ras Welled de l'Oul's army, consisting of 18,000 of their fellow-citizens, was lying dead upon the Dender. It was no matter; they had got the speaking crucifix, but had paid 8000 ounces of gold for it. Still it was no matter; they had got the crown of thorns. The priests made processions from church to church, singing hallelujahs and songs of thanksgiving, when they should have been in sackcloth and ashes, upon their knees, deprecating any further chastisement of their pride, cruelty, and profaneness. All Gondar was

drunk with joy; and Yasous himself was astonished to see them singing the song of Sennaar much more willingly than that of Koscam.

At this time died Abuna Christodulus; and it was customary for the king to advance the money to defray the expence of bringing a successor. But Yasous's money was all gone to Venice for mirrors; and, to defray the expence of bringing a new Abuna, as well as of redeeming the sacred reliques, he laid a small tax upon the churches, saying merrily, "That the Abuna and the crosses were to be maintained and repaired by the public; but that it was incumbent upon the church to purchase new ones when they were worn out."

Theodorus, priest of Debra Selalo, Likianos of Azazo, and Georgis called Kipti, were consigned to the care of three Mahometan merchants and brokers at court, whose names were Hamet Ali, Abdulla, and Abdelcader, to go to Cairo and fetch a successor for Christodulus. They arrived at Hamazen on April 29th, 1748, where the Mahometan guides chose rather to pass the winter season than at Masuah, as at that place they were apprehensive they would suffer extortions and ill usage of every sort. We know not what came of Georgis Kipti; but as soon as the rainy season was over, Theodorus and Likianos came straight to Masuah.

As soon as the Naybe got the whole convoy of priests and Mahometans into his hands, he demanded of them half of the money the king had given them to defray the expences of fetching the Abuna. He pretended also, that both Mahometans and Christians should have passed the rainy season at Masuah. He declared that this was his perquisite, and that he had prepared great and exquisite provisions for them, which, being spoiled and become useless, it was but

reasonable they should pay as if they had consumed them: till this was settled, he declared that none of them should embark, or stir one step from Masuah.

The news of this detention soon arrived at Gondar. Yasous gave immediate orders that Michael Suhul, governor of Tigre (afterward Ras), and the Baharnagash, should with an army blockade Masuah, so as to starve the Naybe into more reasonable behaviour. But, before this could be executed, the Naybe had called the priests before him, and declared, if they did not surrender the money that instant, he would put them to death; and, in place of allowing them time to resolve, he gave them a very plain hint to obey, by ordering the executioner to strike off the heads of two criminals condemned for other crimes, in their presence. The poor wretches Theodorus and Likianos, did not resemble the Portuguese, who would have braved these threats in pursuit of martyrdom. The sight of blood was the most convincing of all argument. They gave up the money, leaving the division of it to the Naybe's discretion. He then hurried them on board a vessel, giving Michael and the Baharnagash notice that they were gone in safety, and that he had obeyed the king's orders in all respects. Michael was at that time in the strictest friendship with the Naybe, who was his principal instrument in collecting firearms in Arabia, to strengthen him in the quarrel he was then meditating against his sovereign.

On the 8th of February 1744, the priests and their guides sailed from Masuah; and they did not arrive at Jidda till the 14th of April. There they found that the ships for Cairo were gone, and that they had lost the monsoon; and as no misfortune comes single, the Sherriffe of Mecca made a demand upon them for as much money as they had paid the Naybe; and, upon refusal, he put Abdelcader in prison, nor was

he released for a twelvemonth after, when the money was sent from Abyssinia; and it was then agreed, that 75 ounces of gold * should in all future times be paid for leave of passage to those who went to Cairo to fetch the Abuna; and 90 ounces a-piece to the Sherriffe, and to the Naybe, for allowing him to pass when chosen, and furnishing him with necessaries during his stay in their respective governments; and this is the agreement that subsists to this day.

In this interim, Lukianos of Azazo, one of the priests, weary of the journey and of his religion, having quarrelled with Abdulla, renounced the Christian faith, and embraced that of Mahomet. Theodorus, Abdulla, and Hamet Ali, being the only three remaining, hired a vessel at Jidda to carry them to the port of Suez, the bottom of the Arabic gulf. Before they had been a month at sea, Abdulla died, as did Hamet Ali, seven days after they arrived at Suez. They had been on sea three months and six days from Jidda to that port, because they sailed against the monsoon.

On the 25th of June Theodorus arrived at Cairo, delivered the present, the account of the Abuna's death, and the king's desire of having speedily a successor. The patriarch, having called together all his bishops, priests, and deacons, conferred the dignity on a monk of the order of St Anthony, the only one acknowledged by the Coptic church. These pass a very austere life in two convents in a dreary desert, never tasting flesh, but living on olives, salt sardines †,

* About one hundred and eighty-six pounds; an ounce of gold at a medium being 10 crowns.

† This is a fish common in the Mediterranean, of the kind of anchovies, the common food of the galley-slaves, and lower sort of people.

wild herbs, and the worst of vegetables. Yet so attached are they to this solitude, that, when they are called to be ordained to this Abyssinian prelacy, a warrant from the basha, with a party of Turks, are necessary to bring the brother elect to Cairo in chains, where he is kept in prison till he be ordained; guarded afterwards, and then forced on board a vessel which carries him to Abyssinia, whence he is certain never to return.

The Abuna departed from Suez the 20th of September; the beginning of November he arrived at Jidda; in February 1745 he sailed from Jidda, taking with him Abdelcader, now freed from prison; he arrived at Masuah the 7th of March, and immediately sent an express to notify his arrival to the king and queen, and to Ras Welled de l'Oul *. Congratulations upon the event were returned from each of them; they requested he would immediately come to court; but this the Naybe refused to permit, till he had first received his dues; and Yasous seemed inclined to pay no more for him than what he had cost already.

The priests, and devout people in Tigre, were very desirous to free the Abuna from his confinement in Masuah. They saw that the king was not inclined to advance money, and all of them knew perfectly, that, whatever pretext he made in the matter, the Ras would not give an ounce of gold to prevent the Abuna from staying there all his life. In this exigency they applied to Janni, a Greek, living at Adowa (of whom I shall hereafter speak), a confidential servant and favourite of Michael, and also well acquainted at Masuah, so see if he could get him released by stratagem. Jan-

* Welled leoul signifies "Son of the most High." It is pronounced Welledeloul, which gives rise to the form of writing it used by the author.—E.

ni concerted the affair with the monks of the monastery of Bizan; two of whom conducted the Abuna by night out of the island of Masuah, and landed him safely in their monastery in the wilderness, with the myron, or consecrated oil, in one hand, and his missal, or liturgy, in the other. So far the escape was complete; but unluckily no orders had been given for Theodorus, who accordingly remained behind at Masuah.

The Naybe, exasperated at the Abuna's flight, wrecked his vengeance on poor Theodorus; put him in irons, and threw him into close prison, where he remained for two months. There was no remedy but paying 80 ounces of gold to the Naybe for his release; he might else have remained there for ever.

The king, not a little surprised at this frequent insolence on the part of the Naybe, began to inquire what could be the reason; for he perfectly knew, not only Suhul Michael, the governor of Tigre, but even the Baharnagash, could reduce Masuah to nothing with their little finger; and further, he was informed, that a strong friendship subsisted between the Naybe and Suhul Michael, and that it was by relying on his friendship that the Naybe adventured to treat the king's servants, at different times, in the manner he had done.

Yasous, desirous to verify this in person, and to dissolve the bands of so unnatural a friendship, marched into Tigre with a considerable army. Passing by Adowa, the residence of Suhul Michael, he was pleased with the warlike appearance of this his seat of government, and the perfect order and subordination that reigned there. Certain disorders and tumults were said to prevail in the neighbouring province of Enderta, where Kasmati Woldo commanded. The sa-

vage people, called Azabo, living at Azab, the low country below Enderta, and the Dobas (a nation of shepherds near them, still more savage, if possible, than they), had laid waste the districts that were next to their frontier, burning the churches, and slaying the priests in the daily inroads which they made into Abyssinia. All these things, bad enough indeed, were at this time aggravated, as was thought, for two reasons; the first, was to cast an odium upon Kasmati Woldo, Michael's great enemy, as incapable of governing his province; the second, to prevent the king in his progress to Masuah, as he openly professed his fixed intention was to punish the Naybe with the utmost severity.

The protection of his subjects from the savages was therefore represented to the king as the most pressing service; and, marching with his usual diligence straight to Enderta, he was met there by Kasmati Woldo, an old experienced officer, who, aiming at no preferment, paying his tribute punctually, and having been constantly occupied in repelling the incursions of the Pagans on the frontier, had not been at court since the reign of Theophilus.

After receiving the necessary information about the country he intended to enter, and taking Kasmati Woldo's two sons with him, the king descended into the low country of Dancali, once a petty Mahometan kingdom, and friendly to Abyssinia, now a mixture of Galla and the natives called Taltal. Without delay he pushed on to Azab, spreading desolation through that little province; always desert enough from its nature, though formerly, from its trade, one of the richest spots in the world.

The king then turned to the right upon the Dobas, who, not expecting an army of that strength, fled and left their whole cattle a prey to Yasous and his soldiers;

a greater number was scarce ever seen in Abyssinia. The king now returned to Enderta, where he confirmed Kasmati Woldo in his government with distinguished marks of favour; and he this year again came back victorious to Gondar, leaving his campaign against the Naybe for another season.

In passing by Adowa, a fray happened among the king's troops and those of Michael; several were killed on both sides; and, as the dispute was between Tigre and Amhara, the two great divisions of the country, it threatened to create a party-quarrel between the soldiers of one division and those of the other. No notice was taken of this when Yasous marched eastward; but, on his return, Michael begged the king to interfere, and make peace between the two parties. To this Yasous answered, that he did not think it worth his while; for they would make peace themselves when they were tired of quarrelling.

Whether this was the cause of sending for Michael to Gondar, or whether it was the story of the Naybe, or what else was the king's motive, we do not know; but, as soon as he was arrived in the capital, he sent Kasmati Ephraim, and Shalaka Kefla, into Tigre, commanding Michael's attendance at Gondar. This Michael absolutely refused; he pretended Kasmati Woldo had estranged the king's affection from him, and that Yasous had called him to Gondar now, to put him to death, upon a pretence of his soldiers' quarrel with the king's troops. This refusal was repeated to Yasous, without any palliation whatever; and he instantly marched from Gondar, and encamped upon the river Waar, where he was reinforced a few days after by Ras Welled de l'Oul, whose intention was to persuade Michael to submission; for he had been advised not to trust the king's oath of for-

giveness unless he had likewise that of Welled de l'Oul.

The king's readiness disconcerted Suhul Michael. Though well armed and appointed himself, as also an excellent general, he did not risk the presenting himself against the king on a plain; for Yasous was much beloved by the soldiers, and always very kind and liberal to them.

The mountain Samayat, though not the most inaccessible in Tigre, was a place of great consequence and strength, when possessed by an army and officer such as Michael. To this natural fortress he carried all his valuable effects, occupied and obstructed all avenues to it, and resolved there to abide his fortune. The king, with his army, sat down at the foot of the mountain; and, encircling it with troops, he ordered it to be assaulted on four sides at once; on one, by Kasmati Waragna; the third, by Kasmati Woldo; and the fourth, by Ras Welled de l'Oul. The king himself went round about to every place, giving his orders, encouraging his men, and fighting himself in the foremost ranks like a common soldier. The mountain was at length carried, with much bloodshed on both sides, and Michael was beat from every part of it but one, which, though not strong enough to hold out against the king's army, if well defended, could not be carried without great loss of men.

Here Michael desired to capitulate. But, before he left the mountain and surrendered to the king, he desired that an officer of trust might be sent to him; because he had then upon the mountain a large collection of treasure, which he desired to keep for the king's use, otherwise it would be dissipated and lost in the hands of the common soldiers. The Ras sent two confidential officers, who took from the hands of Michael a prodigious sum of gold, the precise amount

of which is not named. He then descended the mountain, carrying, as is the custom of the country for vanquished rebels, a stone upon his head, as confessing himself guilty of a capital crime. A violent storm of rain and wind prevented, for that day, his coming into the presence of the king; and the devil, as the Abyssinians believe, began in that storm a correspondence with him, which continued many years; I myself have often heard him vaunt of his having maintained, ever since that time, an intercourse with St Michael the archangel.

On the morning of the 27th of December, Ras Welled de l'Oul ordered Michael to attend him in the habit of a penitent; and, followed by his companions in misfortune (that part of his troops which was taken on the mountain), and surrounded by a number of soldiers, with drums beating and colours flying, he was carried into the king's presence.

Ras Welled de l'Oul had, with difficulty, engaged the king's promise, that he would not put him to death. The good genius of Yasous and his family was labouring by one last effort to save them. On seeing Michael upon the ground, Yasous fell into a violent transport of rage, spurned him with his foot, declaring he retracted his promise, and ordered him to be carried out, and put to death before the door of his tent. Ras Welled de l'Oul, Kasmati Waragna, Kasmati Woldo, and all the officers of consideration, either of the court or army, now fell with their faces upon the ground, crying to the king for mercy and forgiveness. Yasous, if in his heart he did not relent, still was obliged to pardon on such universal solicitation; and this he did, after making the following observation, which soon after was looked on as a prophecy: "I have pardoned the traitor at your instance, because I at all times reward merit more willingly

that I punish crimes; but I call you all to witness, that I wash my hands before God to-day of all that innocent blood Michael shall shed before he brings about the destruction of his country, which I know in his heart he has been long meditating."

I cannot help mentioning it was an extraordinary circumstance, that at the time I was at Gondar, in the very height of Suhul Michael's tyranny, a man quarelled with another who was a scribe, and accussed him before Michael of having recorded this speech of the king, as I have now stated it, in a history that he had written of Yasous's reign. The book was produced; the passage was found and read; and I certainly expected to have seen it torn to pieces, or hung upon a tree about the author's neck. On the contrary, all the Ras said was, "If what he writes is true, wherein is the man to blame?" And turning with a grin to Tecla Haimanout, one of the judges, he said, "Do you remember? I do believe Yasous did say so." The book was restored to the author, and no more said of the matter, not even an order was given to erase the passage. He had no objection to Yasous and to his whole race being prophets; he had only taken a resolution that they should not be kings.

A general silence followed this speech of Yasous, instead of the acclamations of joy usual in such cases. The king then ordered Ras Welled de l'Oul to lead the army on to Gondar, which he did with great pomp and military parade; while the king, who could not forget his forebodings, retired to an island, there to fast some days in consequence of a vow that he had made. This being finished, Yasous returned to Gondar; and, as he was now in perfect peace throughout his kingdom, he began again to decorate the apartments of his palace. A large number of mirrors had

arrived at this time, a present from the Naybe of Masuah, who, after what had happened to his friend Michael, began to feel a little uneasy about the fate of his island.

While Yasous was thus employed, news were sent him from Kasmati Ayo, governor of Begemder, that he had beat the people of Lasta in a pitched battle in their own country. He had forced their strong-holds, dispersed their troops, and received the general submission of the province, which had been in rebellion since the time of Hatze Socinios, above 100 years. Immediately after these news, came Ayo himself to parade and throw his unclean trophies of victory before the king, and brought with him many of the principal people of Lasta to take the oaths of allegiance to the king.

Yasous received the accounts of the success with great pleasure, and still more so the oaths and submissions made to him. He then added Lasta to the province of Begemder, and clothed Ayo magnificently, as well as all those noblemen that came with him from Lasta. The end of this year was not marked with good fortune like the beginning; a plague of locusts fell upon the country, and consumed every green thing, so that a famine seemed inevitable, because, contrary to their custom, they had attached themselves chiefly to the grain. This plague is not so frequent in Abyssinia as the Jesuits have reported it to be. These good fathers indeed bring the locusts upon the country, that, by their pretended miracles, they may chace them away.

Michael had continued some time in prison, in the custody of Ras Welled de l'Oul. But he was afterwards set at full liberty; and it was now the 17th year of Yasous's reign, when, on the 17th of September 1746, at a great promotion of officers of state,

Michael, by the nomination of the king himself, was restored to his government of Tigre; and, a few days after, he returned to that province. All his ancient friends and troops flocked to him as soon as he appeared, to welcome him upon an event looked upon by all as nearly miraculous. Nor did Michael discourage that idea himself, but gave it to be understood, among his most intimate friends, that a vision had assured him that he was thenceforward under the immediate protection of St Michael the archangel, with whom he was to consult on every emergency.

As soon as he had got a sufficient army together, the first thing he did was to attack Kasmati Woldo, without any provocation whatever; and, after beating him in two battles, he drove him from his province, and forced him to take refuge among the Galla, where, soon after, by employing small presents, he procured him to be murdered; the ordinary fate of those who seek protection among those faithless barbarians.

It will seem extraordinary that the king, who had such recent experience of both; the one distinguished for his duty, the other for his obstinate rebellion; should yet tamely suffer his old and faithful servant to fall before a man whom in his heart he so much mistrusted. But the truth is, all Michael's danger was past the moment he got free access to the king and queen; though he was deservedly esteemed to be the ablest soldier in Abyssinia of his time, he was infinitely more capable in intrigues, and private negociations at court, than he was in the field; being a pleasant and agreeable speaker in common conversation; a powerful and copious orator in council; his language, whether Amharic or Tigre (but above all the latter), correct and elegant above any man's at court; steady to the measures he adopted, but often appear-

ing to give them up easily, and without passion, when he saw, by the circumstances of the times, he could not prevail: though violent in the pursuit of riches, when in his own province, where he spared no means nor man to procure them, no sooner had he come to Gondar than he was lavish of his money in the extreme; and indeed he set no value upon it farther than as it served to corrupt men to his ends.

When he surrendered his treasure at the mountain Samayat, he is said to have divided it into several parcels with his own hand. The greatest share fell to the king, who thought he had got the whole; but the officers who received it, and saw different quantities destined for the Iteghe, and Ras Welled de l'Oul, took care to convey them their share, for fear of making powerful enemies. Kasmati Waragna had his part; and even Kasmati Woldo, though Michael soon after plundered and slew him. All Gondar were his friends, because all that capital was bribed on this occasion. It was gold he only lent them, to resume it (as he afterwards did), with great interest, at a proper time.

It still remained in the king's breast to wipe off his defeat at Semmar, as he had upon every other occasion, been victorious; and even in this, he still flattered himself he had not been beat in person. He set out again upon another expedition to Atbara; instead of coasting along the Dender, he descended along the Tacazze into Atbara, where, finding no resistance among the Shepherds, he attached himself in particular to the tribe, called Daveina, which, in the former expedition, had joined Welled de l'Oul's army. Upon the first news of his approach they had submitted; but notwithstanding all promises and pretences of peace, he fell upon them unawares, and almost extirpated the tribe.

Suhul Michael, while the king was thus occupied in the frontier of his province, did every thing that a faithful, active subject could do. He furnished him constantly with the best intelligence, supplied him with the provisions he wanted, and made from time to time, strong detachments of troops to reinforce him, and to secure such posts as were most commodious and important in case of a retreat becoming necessary.

Yasous, who had succeeded to his wish, was fully sensible of the value of such services, and sent, therefore, for Michael, commanding his attendance at Gondar. There was no fear, no hesitation now, as before, in the affair of Samayat. He decamped upon the first notice, even before the rainy season was over and arrived at Gondar on August 30, 1747, bringing with him plenty of gold; few soldiers, indeed, but those picked men, and in better order than the king had ever yet seen troops.

It was plain now to every body, that nothing could stop Michael's growing fortune. He alone seemed not sensible of this. He was humbler and less assuming than before. Those, whom he had first bribed, he continued still to bribe, and added as many new friends to that list as he thought could serve him. He pretended to no precedency, or pre-eminence at court, not even such as was due to the rank of his place, but behaved as a stranger that had no fixed abode among them.

One day, dining with Kasmati Geta, the queen's brother, who was governor of Samen, and drinking out of a common glass decanter, called Brulhe, when it is the privilege and custom of the governor of Tigre to use a gold cup, being asked, "Why he did not claim his privilege?", he said, "All the gold he had was in heaven;" alluding to the name of the

mountain Samayat, where his gold was surrendered, which word signifies heaven. The king, who liked this kind of jests, of which Michael was full, on hearing this, sent him a gold cup, with a note written and placed within it; "Happy are they, who place their riches in heaven!" which Michael directed immediately to be engraved by one of the Greeks upon the cup itself. What became of it I know not; I often wished to have found it out, and purchased it. I saw it the first day he dined, after coming from council, at his return from Tigre, after the execution of Abba Salama; but I never observed it at Serbraxos, nor since. I heard, indeed, a Greek say, he had sent it by Ozoro Esther, as a present to a church of St Michael in Tigre.

Enderta was now given him in addition to the province of Tigre, and soon after Sire, and all the provinces between the Tacazze and the Red Sea; so he was now master of near half of Abyssinia.

The rest of this king's reign was spent at home in his usual amusements and occupations. Several small expeditions were made by his command, under Palambaras Selasse, and other officers, to harass the Shepherds, whom he conquered almost down to Suakem. His ravages, however, had been confined to the peninsula of Atbara, and had never passed to the eastward of the Tacazze; but he had impoverished all that country. After this, by his orders, the Baharnagash, and other officers, entered that division called Derkin, between the Mareb and the Atbara, and still farther, between the Mareb and the mountains, in a part of it called Ajam. In this country Hassine Wed Ageeb was defeated by the Baharnagash with great slaughter; and the Shekh of Jibbel Musa, one of the most powerful of the Shepherds, was taken prisoner by Palambaras Selasse, without resistance, and car-

ried, with his wife, his family, and his cattle, in triumph to Gondar, where, having sworn allegiance to the king, he was kindly treated, and sent home with presents, and every thing that had been taken from him.

This year, being the 24th of Yasous's reign, he was taken ill, and died on the 21st day of June, 1753, after a very short illness. As he was but a young man, and of a strong constitution, there was some suspicion he died by poison, given him by the queen's relations, who were desirous to secure another minority, rather than serve under a king, who, by every action, shewed he was no longer to be led, or governed, by any, but least of all by them.

Yasous was married very young to a lady of noble family in Amhara, by whom he had two sons, Adigo and Aylo: But their mother, pretending to a share of her husband's government, and to introduce her friends at court, so hurt Welleta Georgis, the Iteghe, or queen-regent, that she prevailed on the king to banish both the mother and sons to the mountain of Wechne.

In order to prevent such interference for the future, the Iteghe took a step, the like of which had never before been attempted in Abyssinia. It was to bring a wife to Yasous from a race of Galla. Her name was Wobit, daughter of Amitzo, to whom Bacuffa had once fled when he escaped from the mountain before he was king, and had been kindly entertained there. Her family was of the tribe of Edjow, and the division of Toluma, that is, of the southern Galla upon the frontiers of Amhara. They were esteemed the politest, that is, the least barbarous of the name. But it was no matter, they were Galla, and that was enough. Between them and Abyssinia, oceans of blood had been shed, and strong prejudices imbibed

against them, never to be effaced by marriages. She was, however, brought to Gondar, christened by the name of Betsabee, and married to Yasous: By her he had a son, named Joas, who succeeded his father.

JOAS.

From 1753 to 1769.

This Prince, a favourer of the Galla, his relations—Great Dissensions on bringing them to court—War of Begemder—Ras Michael brought to Gondar—Defeats Ayto Mariam Barea—Refuses to be accessary to his Death—King favours Waragna Fasil—Battle of Azazo—King assassinated in his palace.

Upon the first news of the death of Yasous, the old officers and servants of the crown, remembering the tumults and confusion that happened in Gondar at his accession, repaired to the palace from their different governments, each with a small well-regulated body of troops, sufficient to keep order, and strengthen the hands of Ras Welled de l'Oul, whom they all considered as the father of his country. The first who arrived was Waragna Kasmati of Damot, then Ayo of Begemder; and, very soon after, though from much the greatest distance, Suhul Michael, governor of Tigre. These three entered the palace, with Welled de l'Oul at their head, received the young king, Joas, from the hands of the Iteghe, his grandmother, and proclaimed him, with the usual formalities, without any opposition or tumult whatever.

A number of promotions immediately followed; but it was observed with great discontent by many,

that the Iteghe's family and relations were grown so numerous, that they were sufficient to occupy all the great offices of state without the participation of any of the old families, which were the strength of the crown in former reigns; and that no preferment was now to be expected unless through some relation to the queen-mother.

Welled Hawaryat, son to Michael, governor of Tigre, had married Ozoro Altash, the queen's third daughter, almost a child; and long before that, Netcho of Tcherkin had married Ozoro Esther, likewise very young. Ras Michael, old as he was, had made known his pretensions to Ozoro Welletta Israel, the queen's second daughter, immediately younger than Ozoro Esther. These proposals, from an old man, had been received with great contempt and derision by Welletta Israel, and she persevered so long in the derision of Michael's courtship, that it left strong impressions on the hard heart of that old warrior, which shewed themselves after in very disagreeable consequences to that lady all the time Michael was in power.

The first that broke the peace of the new reign was Nanna Georgis, chief of one of the clans of the Agows of Damot. Engaged in old feuds with the Galla on the other side of the Nile, the natural enemies of his country, he could not see, but with great displeasure, a Galla, such as Kasmati Waragna, however worthy, governor of Damot, and capable, therefore, of over-running the whole province in a moment, by calling his Pagan countrymen from the other side.

Waragna, though this was in his power, knew the measure was unpopular. Kasmati Eshte was the queen's brother, and governor of Ibaba, a royal residence, which has a large territory and salary annexed to it. When, therefore, at council, he had complained of the injury done to him by Nanna Georgis, he

refused the taking upon him the redressing these injuries, and punishing the Agows, unless Kasmati Eshte was joined with him in the commission.

The reason of this was, as I have often before observed, that, as the Agows are those that pay the greatest tribute in gold to the king, and furnish the capital with all sorts of provisions, any calamity happening in their country is severely felt by the inhabitants of Gondar; and the knowledge of this occasions a degree of presumption and confidence in the Agows, of which they have been very often the dupes. This, indeed, happened at this very instant. For Waragna and Eshte marched from Gondar, and with them a number of veteran troops of the king's household of Maitsha, depending on Ibaba; and this army, without bringing one Galla from the other side of the Nile, gave Nanna Georgis and his Agows such an overthrow that his clan was nearly extirpated, and many of the principal people of that nation slain.

Nanna Georgis, who chiefly was aimed at as the author of this revolt, escaped, with great difficulty, wounded, from the field; and the feud which had long subsisted between Waragna's family and the race of the Agows, received very great addition that day, and came down to their posterity, as we shall soon see by what happened in Waragna's son's time, at the bloody and fatal battle of Banja.

The next affair that called the attention of government, was a complaint brought by the monks of Magwena, a ridge of rocks of small extent, not far from Tcherkin, the estate of Kasmati Netcho. These mountains, for a great part of the year, almost calcined under a burning sun, have, in several months, violent and copious showers of rain, which, received in vast caves and hollows of the mountain, and out of the reach of evaporation, are the means of creating and maintaining all sorts of verdure, and all scenes of pleasure,

in the hot season of the year, when the rains do not fall elsewhere; and, as the rocks have a considerable elevation above the level of the plain, they are at no season infected with those feverish disorders that lay the low country waste.

Netcho was a man of pleasure, and thought, since the monks, by retiring to rocks and deserts, meant to subject themselves to hardship and mortification, that these delightful and flowery scenes, the groves of Magwena, were much more suited to the enjoyment of happiness with the young and beautiful Ozoro Esther, than for any set of men, who, by their austerities, were at constant war with the flesh. Upon these principles, which it would be very difficult for the monks themselves to refute, he took possession of the mountain Magwena, and of those bowers that, though in possession of saints, did not seem to have been made for the solitary pleasure of one sex only. This piece of violence was, by the whole body of monks, called sacrilege. Violent excommunications, and denunciations of divine vengeance, were thundered out against Kasmati Netcho. An army was sent against him; he was defeated, and taken prisoner, and confined upon a mountain in Walkayt, where, soon after, he died, but not before the Iteghe had shewn her particular mark of displeasure, by taking her daughter, Ozoro Esther, his wife, from him, that she too, and her only son, Confu, might not be involved in the excommunications, and the imputed crime of sacrilege.

At this time died Kasmati Waragna, full of years and glory, having, though a stranger, preserved his allegiance to the last, and more than once saved the state by his wisdom, bravery, and activity. He is almost a single example in Abyssinian history, of a great officer, governor of a province, that never was

in rebellion, and a remarkable instance of Bacuffa's penetration, who, from a mean condition, chose him as capable of the greatest offices, in which he usefully served both his son and grandson.

Soon after, Ayo, governor of Begemder, an older officer still than Waragna, arrived in Gondar, and resigned his government into the queen's hands. This resignation was received, because it was understood that it was directly to be conferred upon his son, Mariam Barea, by far the most hopeful young Abyssinian nobleman of his time. Another mark of favour soon followed, nay perhaps was the occasion of this. Ozoro Esther, the very young widow of Netcho, was married, very much against her own consent, to the young governor of Begemder, and this marriage was crowned with the universal applause of court, town, and country; for Mariam Barea possessed every virtue that could make a great man popular; and it was impossible to see Ozoro Esther, and hear her speak, without being attached to her for ever after.

Still the complaint remained, that there was no promotion, no distinction of merit, but through some relation to the queen-mother; and the truth of this was soon so apparent, and the discontent it occasioned so universal, that nothing but the great authority of Ras Welled de l'Oul, the Iteghe's brother, could hinder this concealed fire from breaking out into a flame.

The queen, mother to Joas, was Ozoro Wobit, a Galla. Upon his accession to the throne, therefore, a large body of Galla, said to be 1200 horse, were sent as a present to the young king, as the portion of his mother. A number of private persons had accompanied these; part from curiosity, part from desire of preferment, and part from attachment to those that were already gone before them. These last were

formed into a body of infantry of 600 men, and the command given to a Galla, whose name was Wooshe-ka; so that the regency, in the person of the queen, seemed to have gained fresh force from the minority of the young king Joas, as yet perfectly subject to his mother.

There were four bodies of household troops absolutely devoted to the king's will. One of these, the Koccob horse, was commanded by a young Armenian, not 30 years of age. He had been left in Abyssynia by his father in Yasous's time, and care had been taken of him by the Greeks. Yasous had distinguished him by several places, while a mere youth, and employed him in errands to Masuah and Arabia, by which he became known to Ras Michael. Upon the death of Yasous, the Iteghe put him about her grandson Joas, as Baloomal, which is, *gentleman of the bed-chamber*, or, *companion to the king* *. He then became Asaleffa el Camisha, which means *groom of the stole*, but at last was promoted to the great place of Billetana Gueta Takakin *chamberlain*, or *master of the household*, the third post in government, by which he took place of all the governors of provinces while in Gondar.

There is no doubt, Joas would have made him Ras, had he reigned as long as his father. Besides his own language, he understood Turkish, Arabic, and Malabar, and was perfect master of the Tigrè. But his great excellence was the knowledge of Amharic, which he was thought to speak as chastely and elegantly as Ras Michael himself. He is reported likewise to have possessed a species of jurisprudence, whence derived I

* Mr Bruce was made one of the *Baalomal* to Teclahaimanout II. soon after his coming to Gondar.—E.

never knew, which so pleased the Abyssinians, that the judges often requested his attendance on the king: at which time he sat at the head of the table, where it is supposed the king would place himself did he appear personally in judgment (which, as may be learned from divers places in this history, he never does). Certain mornings in the week, therefore, he sat publicly in the market-place, and gave judgment soon after the break of day.

I saw this young man with his father at Loheia. He understood no European language; was just then returned from India, and had a considerable quantity of diamonds, and other precious stones, to sell. He spoke with tears in his eyes of Abyssinia, from which he was banished, and urged that I should take him there with me. But I had too much at stake to charge myself with the consequences of anybody's behaviour but my own, and therefore refused it.

The great favour the Galla were in at court, encouraged many of their countrymen to follow them; and, by the king's desire, two of his uncles were sent for, and they not only came, but brought with them a thousand horse. These were two young men, brothers of the queen Wobit, just now dead. The eldest was named Brulhé, the younger Lubo. In an instant, nothing was heard *in* the palace but Galla. The king himself affected to speak nothing else. He had entirely entrusted the care of his person to his two uncles; and, both being men of intrigue, they thought themselves sufficiently capable of making a party, supporting it, and placing the king at the head of it; and this they effected as soon as it was conceived, whilst the Abyssinians saw, with the utmost detestation and abhorrence, a Gallan and inimical government erected in the very heart or metropolis of their country.

Woodage had been long governor of Amhara. He

had succeeded Palambaras Duré, in Bacuffa's time, when he had been promoted to the dignity of Ras.

These two were heads of the only great families in Amhara, who took that government, as it were, by rotation. Woodage, in one of the excursions into Atbara, had made an Arab's, or a shepherd's daughter, prisoner, baptised her, and lived with her as his mistress. The passion Woodage bore to this fair slave was not, however, reciprocal. She had fixed her affections upon his eldest son, and their frequent familiarities at last brought about a discovery. This very much shocked Woodage; but, instead of having recourse to public justice, he called his brothers, and some other heads of his family before him, and examined into the fact with them, desiring his son to defend himself. The crime was clearly proved in all its circumstances. Upon which Woodage, by his own authority, condemned his son to death; and not only so, but caused his sentence to be put in execution, by hanging the young man over a beam in his own house. As for the slave, he released her, as not being bound to any return of affection to him, from whom she had only received evil, and been deprived of her natural liberty.

It seems this claim of *patria potestas* was new in Abyssinia; and Bacuffa took it so ill, that he deprived Woodage of his office at court, and banished him to Amhara, then governed by Palambaras Dure. To this loss of influence, another circumstance contributed. He was a relation of Yasous's first wife, who, by the Iteghe's intrigues, had been sent with her two sons to the mountain of Wechne, and Joas, a younger son of Yasous, preferred in their places.

It happened that Palambaras Dure died; and as the succession fell regularly upon the unpopular Woodage, the king's uncle, Lubo obtained a promise of the

government of Amhara for himself. All Gondar was shocked at this strange choice: Amitzo and his Edjow were already domiciled on the southern frontiers of that province, and there was no doubt but this nomination would put Amhara into his possession for ever. All the inhabitants of Gondar were ready to oppose, by arms, this appointment of the king; and it was thought that, underhand, the Iteghe fomented the dissatisfaction. The king, however, terrified by the violent resentment of the populace, at the instance of Ras Welled de l'Oul recalled his nomination.

At this time Michael, who saw the consequence of these disputes, but abstained from taking any share, because he knew that both parties were promoting his interest by their mutual animosity, came to Gondar in great pomp, upon an honourable errand.

Baady, son of l'Oul, king of the Funge, or, as they are called in the Abyssinian annals, Noba *, who had defeated Yasous at Sennaar, after a tyrannical and bloody reign of thirty-three years, was deposed in the 1764, by Nassar his son, whom his minister Shekh Adelan, with his brother Abou Kalec, governor of Kordofan, had put in his place. Baady had fled to Suhul Michael, whose fame was extended all over Atbara. Michael received him kindly, promised him his best services with Joas, and that he would march in person to Sennaar, and reinstate him with an army, if the king should so command.

Michael conducted him into the presence of the king, where, in a manner unbecoming a sovereign, and which the successor of Joas would not have per-

* Noba, in the language of Sennaar, signifies soldier; it is probably from this the ancient name of Nubia first came.

mitted he kissed the ground, and declared himself a vassal of Abyssinia. The king assigned him a large revenue, and put him possession of the government of Ras el Feel, upon the frontier of Sennaar, where Ras Welled de l'Oul advised him to wait patiently till the dissensions that then prevailed at court were quieted, when Michael should have orders to reinstate him in his kingdom. This was a wise council; but he to whom it was given was not wise, and therefore did not follow it. After a short stay at Ras el Feel, he was decoyed from this place of refuge by the intrigues of Adelan, and induced to trust himself in Atbara, where he was betrayed and taken prisoner by Welled Hassen, Shekh of Teawa, who murdered him privately, as we shall hereafter see, two years after his flight from Gondar.

At this time, Ras Welled de l'Oul's death was a signal for all parties to engage. Nothing had withheld them but his prudence and authority; and from that time began a civil war, which has continued ever since, was in its full vigour at the time I was in Abyssinia, and without any prospect that it would ever have an end.

The high degree of power to which the brothers and their Galla arrived; the great affection the king shewed to them, owing to their having early infected him with their bloody and faithless principles, gave great alarm to the queen and her relations, whose influence they were every day diminishing. The last stroke, the death of Welled de l'Oul, seemed to be a fatal one, and to threaten the entire dissolution of her power. In order to counterbalance this, they associated to their party and council Mariam Barea, who had lately married Ozoro Esther, and was in possession of the second province in the state for riches and strength, and greatly increased in its importance by

the officer that commanded it. Upon the death of Welled de l'Oul, the principal fear of the Galla was that Mariam Barea should be brought to Gondar as Ras. The union between him and Kasmati Eshte, formerly as strong by inclination as now it was by blood, put them in terror for their very existence, and a blow was to be struck at all hazards that was to separate these interests for ever.

Eshte, upon taking possession of the province of Damot, found the Djawi, established on the frontiers of the province, very much inclined to revolt. Notwithstanding peace had been established among the Agows, ever since Nanna Georgis had been defeated at the last battle, the Galla had still continued to rob and distress them, contrary to the public faith that had been pledged to them.

Eshte was too honest a man to suffer this; but the truth was, the Djawi had felt the advantage of having a chief like the late Waragna, governor of Damot; and they wanted, by all means, to reduce the ministers to the necessity of making that command hereditary in his family, by Fasil his son being preferred to succeed him.

This Fasil, whom I shall hereafter call Waragna Fasil, a name which was given to distinguish him from many other Fasils in the army, was a man then about twenty-two, whom Eshte had kept about him in a private station, and had lately given him a subaltern command among his own countrymen, the Djawi of Damot. From the services that he had then rendered, it was expected that greater preferment was to follow.

The insolence of the Djawi had come to such a pitch, that they had offered Eshte battle; but they had fled with very little resistance, and been driven over the Nile to their countrymen whence they came.

Eshte, roused from his indolence, now shewed himself the gallant soldier that he really was. He crossed the Nile at a place never attempted before; and though he lost a considerable number of men in the passage, yet that disadvantage was more than compensated by the advantage it gave him of falling upon the Galla unexpectedly. He therefore destroyed, or dispersed several tribes of them, possessed himself of their crops, drove off their cattle, wives, and children, and obliged them to sue for peace on his own terms; and then repassed the Nile, re-establishing the Djawi, after submission, in their ancient possessions.

Upon news of Welled de l'Oul's death, and the known intention of the queen, that Eshte should succeed him in the office of Ras, he was mustering his soldiers to march to Gondar. Damot, the Agows, Goutto, and Maitsha, all readily joined him from every quarter; and Waragna Fasil had been sent to bring in the Djawi with the rest. Eshte had marched by slow journies from Buré, slenderly attended, to arrive at Goutto, the place of rendezvous; and, being come to Fagitta, in his way thither, he encamped upon a plain there, near to the church of St George.

It was in the evening, when news were brought him that the whole Djawi had come out, to a man, from good will, to attend him to Gondar. This mark of kindness had very much pleased him; and he looked upon it as a grateful return for his mild treatment of them after they were vanquished. A stool was set in the shade, without a small house where he then was lodged, that he might see the troops pass; when Hubna Fasil, a Galla, who commanded them, availing himself of the privilege of approaching near, always customary upon these occasions, run him through the body with a lance, and threw him dead upon the ground. The rest of the

Galla fell immediately upon all his attendants, put them to flight, and proclaimed Waragna Fasil governor of Damot and the Agows.

This intelligence was immediately sent to their countrymen, Brulhe and Lubo, at Gondar, who prevailed upon the king to confirm Waragna Fasil in his command, though purchased with the murder of the worthiest man in his dominions, who was his own uncle, brother to the Iteghe; and this was thought to do more than counterbalance the accession of strength the queen's party had received from the marriage of Ozoro Esther with Mariam Barea.

In critical times like these, the greatest events are produced from the smallest accidents. Ayo, father to Mariam Barea, had always been upon bad terms with Michael. It was at first emulation between two great men; but, after Ayo had assisted the king in taking Michael prisoner at the mountain Samayat, this emulation had degenerated into perfect hatred on the part of Michael.

Just before Kasmati Ayo had resigned Begemder to his son, and retired to private life, two servants of Michael had fled with two swords, which they used to carry before him, claiming the protection of Kasmati Ayo. Michael had claimed them before the king, who, loath to determine between the two, not being at that time instigated by the Galla, had accepted the proposal of Michael to have the matter of right tried before the judges; but, upon resignation of the province, and retiring, the thing had blown over and been forgotten.

Soon after this accession of Mariam Barea, Michael intimated to him the order the king had given, that the judges should try the matter of difference between them. Mariam Barea refused this, and up-

braided Michael with meanness and prostitution of the dignity he bore, to consent to submit himself to the venal judgment of weak old men, whose consciences were hackneyed in prejudice or partiality, and always known to be under the influence of party. He put Suhul Michael in mind also, that, being both of them the king's lieutenant-generals, representatives of his person in the provinces they governed, noble by birth, and soldiers by profession, they had no superior but God and their sovereign, therefore it was below them to acknowledge or receive any judgment between them unless from God, by an appeal to the sword, or from the king, by a sentence intimated to them by a proper officer; that Suhul Michael might choose either of these ways of deciding the difference which should seem best to him; and if he chose the latter, abiding by the sentence of the king, he would then restore him the swords upon the king's first command; but he despised the judges, and disowned their jurisdiction.

This spirited answer was magnified into the crime of disobedience and rebellion. Michael pursued it no further. He knew it was in good hands, which, when once the matter was set agoing, would never let it drop. Accordingly, to every one's surprise but Michael's, a proclamation was made, that the king had deprived Mariam Barea of his government for disobedience, and had given it to Kasmati Brulhe his uncle, now governor of Begemder.

All Abyssinia was in a ferment at this promotion. The number, power, and vicinity of that race of Galla being considered, this was but another way of giving the richest and strongest barrier of Abyssinia into the hands of its hereditary and bloody enemy.

There could be no doubt, indeed, but that, as soon as Brulhe should have taken possession of his government the kingdom would be instantly over-run by the united force of that savage and Pagan nation; and there was nothing afterwards to avert danger from the metropolis, for the boundaries of Begemder reach within a very short day's journey of Gondar.

Mariam Barea, one of the noblest in point of birth in the country where he lived, setting every private consideration aside, was too good a citizen to suffer a measure so pernicious to take place quietly in his time, while the province was under his command. But, besides this, he considered himself as degraded and materially hurt both in honour and interest, and very sensibly felt the affront of being, himself and his kindred, subjected to a race of Pagans, whom he had so often overthrown in the field.

The king's army marched, under the command of his uncle Brulhe, to take possession of his government; it was with much difficulty, indeed, that Joas could be kept from appearing in person, but he was left under the inspection and tuition of his uncle Lubo, at Gondar. Brulhe made very slow advances; his army several times assembled, as often disbanded of itself; and near a year was spent before he could move from his camp on the lake Tzana, with a force capable of shewing or maintaining itself in Begemder, from the frontiers of which he was not half a day's journey.

Mariam Barea remained all this time inactive in Begemder, attending to the ordinary duties of his office, with a perfect contempt of Brulhe and his proceedings. But, in the interim, he left no means untried to pacify the king, and dissuade him from a

measure he saw would be ruinous to the state in general.

Mariam Barea, though young, had the prudence and behaviour of a man of advanced years. He was esteemed, without comparison, the bravest soldier and best general in the kingdom, except old Suhul Michael, his hereditary rival and enemy. But his manners were altogether different from those of Michael. He was open, cheerful, and unreserved; liberal, even to excess, but not from any particular view of gaining reputation by it; as moderate in the use of victory as indefatigable to obtain it; temperate in all his pleasures; easily brought to forgive, and that forgiveness always sincere; a steady observer of his word, even in trifles; and distinguished for two things very uncommon in Abyssinia, regularity in his devotions, and constancy to one wife, which never was impeached. In his last remonstrance, after many professions of his duty and obedience, he put the king in mind, that, at his investiture, "The laws of the country imposed upon him an oath which he took in presence of his majesty, and after receiving the holy sacrament, that he was not to suffer any Galla in Begemder, but rather, if needful, die with sword in hand to prevent it; that he considered the contravening of that oath as a deliberate breach of the allegiance which he owed to God and to his sovereign, and of the trust reposed in him by his country; that the safety of the princes of the royal family, sequestered upon the mountain of Wechne, depended upon the observance of this oath; that otherwise they would be in constant danger of being extirpated by Pagans, as they had already nearly been in former ages, at two different times, upon the rocks Damo and Geshen; and he begged the king, if, unfortunately, he could not be reconciled to him, to give his command to Kasmati Geta, Kasmati Euse-

bius, or any Abyssinian nobleman—in which case, he would immediately resign, and retire to private life with his old father."

He concluded by saying, that "As he had formed a resolution, he thought it his duty to submit it to the king; that, if his majesty was resolved to march and lead the army himself, he would retire till he was stopped by the frontiers of the Galla, and the farthest limits of Begemder; and, so far from molesting the army in their route, the king might be assured, that, though his own men should be straitened, abundance of every kind of provision and refreshment should be left in his majesty's route. But if, contrary to his wish, troops of Galla, commanded by a Galla, should come to take possession of his province, he would fight them at the well of Fernay *, before one Galla should drink there, or advance a pike length into Begemder."

This declaration was, by orders of Ras Michael, entered into the Deftar, and written in letters of gold, after Mariam Barea's death, no doubt, at the instigation of Ozoro Esther, jealous for the reputation of her dead husband. It is entitled, "The dutiful declaration of the Governor of Begemder;" and it is signed by two Umbares, or judges. Whether the original was so or not, I cannot say.

The return made to this by the king was of the harshest kind, full of taunts and scoffs, and presumptuous confidence; announcing the speedy arrival of Brulhe, as to a certain victory; and, to shew what further assistance he trusted in, he ordered Ras Michael to be proclaimed governor of Samen, the pro-

* A well near Karoota, immediately on the frontiers of Begemder.

vince on the Gondar side of the Tacazze, that no obstacle might be left in the way of that general from Tigre, if it should be resolved on to recal him.

In Abyssinia there is a kind of glass bottle, very light, and of the size, shape, and strength of a Florence wine flask; only the neck is wider, like that of our glass decanters, twisted for ornament' sake, and the lips of it folded back, such as we call cannon-mouthed. These are made at Trieste, on the Adriatic; and thousands of packages of them are brought from Arabia to Gondar, where they are in use for all liquors, which are clear enough to bear the glass, such as wine and spirits. They are very thin and fragile, and are called *brulhe*. Mariam Barea, provoked at being so undervalued as he was in the king's message, returned only for answer, "Still the king had better take my advice, and not send his *brulhe's* here; they are but weak, and the rocks about Begemder hard; at any rate, they do right to move slowly, otherwise they might break by the way."

As soon as this defiance was reported to the king and his counsellors, all was in a flame, and orders given to march immediately. The whole of the king's household, consisting of 8000 veteran troops, were ordered to join the army of Brulhe. This, though it added to the display of the army, contributed nothing to the real strength of it; for all, excepting the Galla, were resolved neither to shed their own blood, nor that of their brethren, under the banners of so detested a leader.

This was not unknown to Mariam Barea; but neither the advantage of the ground, the knowledge of Brulhe's weakness, nor any other consideration, could induce him to take one step, or harass his enemy, out of his own province; nor did he suffer a musket to be fired, or a horse to charge, till Brulhe's van was

drawn up on the brink of the well Fernay. After he had placed the horse of the province of Lasta opposite to the Edjow Galla, against whom his design was, the armies joined, and the king's troops immediately gave way. The Edjow, however, engaged fiercely, and in great earnest, with the horse of Lasta, an enemy fully as cruel and savage as themselves, but much better horsemen, better armed, and better soldiers. The moment the king's troops turned their backs, the trumpets from Mariam Barea's army forbade the pursuit; while the rest of the Begemder horse, who knew the intention of their general, surrounded the Edjow, and cut them to pieces, though valiantly fighting to the last man.

Brulhe fell, among the herd of his countrymen, not distinguished by any action of valour. Mariam Barea had given the most express orders to take him alive; or, if that could not be, to let him escape; but by no means to kill him. But a menial servant of his, more willing to revenge his master's wrongs, than adopt his moderation, forced his way through the crowd of Galla, where he saw Brulhe fighting; and, giving him two wounds through his body with a lance, left him dead upon the field, bringing away his horse along with him to his master, as a token of his victory. Mariam Barea, upon hearing that Brulhe was dead, foresaw, in a moment, what would infallibly be the cosequence; and exclaimed, in great agitation, "Michael, and all the army of Tigre, will march against me before autumn."

He was not in this a false prophet; for no sooner was Brulhe's defeat and death known, than the king, from resentment and fear, the fatal rulers of weak minds, the constant instigation of Lubo, and the remnant of Brulhe's party, declared there was no safety but in Ras Michael. An express was therefore immediately

sent to him, commanding his attendance, and conferring upon him the office of Ras, by which he became invested with supreme power, both civil and military. This was an event Michael had long wished for. He had nearly as long foreseen that it must happen, and would involve both king and queen, and their respective parties, equally in destruction; but he had not spent his time merely in reflection, he had made every preparation possible, and was ready. So soon, then, as he received the king's orders, he prepared to march from Adowa with 26,000 men, all the best soldiers in Abyssinia, about 10,000 of whom were armed with firelocks.

It happened that two Azages, and several other great officers, were sent to him into Tigre with these orders, and to invest him with the government of Samen. Upon their mentioning the present situation of affairs, Michael sharply reflected upon the king's conduct, and that of those who had counselled him, which must end in the ruin of his family, and the state in general. He highly extolled Mariam Barea, as the only man in Abyssinia that knew his duty, and had courage to persevere in it. As for himself, being the king's servant, he would obey his commands, whatever they were, faithfully, and to the letter; but, as holding now the first place in council, he must plainly tell him, the ruin of Mariam Barea would be speedily and infallibly followed by that of his country.

After this declaration, Michael decamped, with his army encumbered by no baggage, not even provisions, women, or tents, nor useless beasts of burden. His soldiers, attentive only to the care of their arms, lived freely and licentiously upon the miserable countries through which they passed, and which they laid wholly waste, as if belonging to an enemy.

He advanced, by equal, steady and convenient marches, in diligence, but not in haste. Not content with the subsistence of his troops, he laid a composition of money upon all those districts within a day's march of the place through which he passed; and upon this not being readily complied with, he burnt the houses to the ground, and slaughtered the inhabitants. Woggora, the granary of Gondar, full of rich large towns and villages, was all on fire before him; and that capital was filled with the miserable inhabitants stript of every thing, flying before Ras Michael as before an army of Pagans. The king's understanding was now restored to him for an instant; he saw clearly the mischief his warmth had occasioned, and was truly sensible of the rash step he had taken by introducing Michael. But the die was cast; repentance was no longer in season; his all was at stake, and he was tied to abide the issue.

Michael, with his army in order of battle, approached Gondar with a very warlike appearance. He descended from the high lands of Woggora into the valleys which surround the capital, and took possession of the rivers Kahha and Angrab, which run through these valleys, and which alone supply Gondar with water. He took post at every entrance into the town, and every place commanding those entrances, as if he intended to besiege it. This conduct struck all degrees of people with terror, from the king and queen down to the lowest inhabitant. All Gondar passed an anxious night, fearing a general massacre in the morning; or that the town would be plundered, or laid under some exorbitant ransom, capitation, or tribute.

But this was not the real design of Michael; he intended to terrify, but to do no more. He entered Gondar early in the morning, and did homage to the

king in the most respectful manner. He was invested with the charge of Ras by Joas himself; and from the palace, attended by two hundred soldiers, and all the people of note in the town, he went straight to take possession of the house which is particularly appropriated to his office, and sat down in judgment, with the doors open.

Marauding parties of soldiers had entered at several parts of the town, and begun to use that licence they had been accustomed to on their march, pilfering and plundering houses, or persons that seemed without protection. Upon the first complaints, as he rode through the town, he caused twelve of the delinquents to be apprehended, and hanged upon trees in the streets, sitting upon his mule till he saw the execution performed. After he had arrived at his house, and was seated, these executions were followed by above fifty others in different quarters of Gondar. That same day, he established four excellent officers in four quarters of the town. The first was Kefla Yasous, a man of the greatest worth, whom I shall frequently mention as a friend in the course of my history; the second, Billetana Gueta Welleta Michael, that is, first master of the household to the king. He had given that old officer that office, upon superseding Lubo the king's uncle, without any consent asked or given. He was a man of a very morose turn, with whom I was never connected. The third was Billetana Gueta Tecla, his sister's son, a man of very great worth and merit, who had the soft and gentle manners of Amhara, joined to the determined courage of Tigre.

Michael took upon himself the charge of the fourth district. He did not pretend by this to erect a military government in Gondar; on the contrary, these officers were only appointed to give force to the sentences and proceedings of the civil judges, and had

no deliberation in any cause out of the camp. But two Umbares, or judges, of the twelve, were obliged to attend each of the three districts; two were left in the king's house, and four had their chamber of judicature in his.

The citizens, upon this fair aspect of government, where justice and power united to protect them, dismissed all their fears, became calm and resigned to Michael the second day after his arrival, and only regretted that they had been in anarchy, and strangers to his government so long.

The third day after his arrival, he held a full council in the presence of the king. He sharply rebuked both parties in a speech of considerable length, in which he expressed much surprise, that both king and queen, after the experience of so many years, had not discovered that they were equally unfit to govern a kingdom, and that it was impossible to keep distant provinces in order, when they paid such inattention to the police of the metropolis. Great part of this speech applied to the king, who, with the Iteghe and Galla, were in a balcony as usual, in the same room, though at some distance, and above the table where the council sat, but within convenient hearing.

The troubled state, and destruction of Woggora, and the insecurity of the roads from Damot, had made a famine in Gondar. The army possessed both the rivers, and suffered no supply of water to be brought into the town, but allowed two jars for each family twice a-day, and broke them when they returned for more *.

* This is commonly done in times of trouble, to keep the townsmen in awe, as if fire was intended, which it should not be in their power to quench.

Ras Michael, at his rising from council, ordered a loaf of bread, a brulhe of water, and an ounce of gold, all articles portable enough, to be exposed in the market-place, upon the head of a drum, without any apparent watching. But though the Abyssinians are thieves of the first rate, though meat and drink were very scarce in the town, and gold still scarcer, though a number of strangers came into it with the army, and the nights were almost constantly twelve hours long, nobody ventured to attempt the removing any of the three articles that, from the Monday to the Friday, had been exposed night and day, in the market-place, unguarded.

All the citizens, now surrounded with an army, found the security and peace they before had been strangers to, and every one deprecated the time when the government should pass out of such powerful hands. All violent oppressors, all those that valued themselves as leaders of parties, saw, with an indignation which they durst not suffer to appear, that they were now at last dwindled into absolute insignificance.

Having settled things upon this basis, Ras Michael next prepared to march out for the war of Begemder; and he summoned, under the severest penalties, all the great officers to attend him with all the forces they could raise. He insisted, likewise, that the king himself should march; and refused to let a single soldier stay behind him in Gondar; not that he wanted the assistance of those troops, or trusted to them; but he saw the destruction of Mariam Barca was resolved on, and he wished to throw the odium of it on the king. He affected to say of himself, that he was but the instrument of the king and his party, and had no end of his own to attain. He expatiated, upon all occasions, upon the civil and military virtues of Mariam Barca;

said, that he himself was old, and that the king should walk coolly and cautiously, and consider the value that officer would be of to his posterity, and to the nation, when he should be no more.

Upon the first news of the king's marching, Mariam Barea, who was encamped upon the frontiers, near where he defeated Brulhe, fell back to Garraggara, in the middle of Begemder. The king followed, with apparent intention of coming to a battle without loss of time; and Mariam Barea, by his behaviour, shewed in what different lights he viewed an army, at the head of which was his sovereign, and one commanded by a Galla.

No such moderation was shewed on the king's part. His army burnt and destroyed the whole country through which they passed. It is plain, that it was Joas's intention to revenge the death of Brulhe upon the province itself, as well as upon Mariam Barea. As for Ras Michael, the behaviour of the king's army had nothing in it new, or that could either surprise or displease him. Friend as he was to peace and good order at home, his invariable rule was to indulge his soldiers in every licence, that the most profligate mind could wish to commit, when marching against an enemy.

It was known the armies were to engage at Nefac Musa; because Mariam Barea had said, he would fight Brulhe, to prevent him entering the province, but retreat before the king till he could no longer avoid going out of it. The king then marched upon the tract of Mariam Barea, burning and destroying on each side of him, as wide as possible, by detachments and scouring parties. Allo Fasil, an officer of the king's household, a man of low birth, of very moderate parts, and one who used to divert the king as a kind of buffoon, otherwise a good soldier, had, as a

favour, obtained a small party of horse, with which he ravaged the low country of Begemder.

The reader will remember, in the beginning of this history, that a singular revolution happened, in as singular a manner, the usurper of the house of Zague having voluntarily resigned the throne to the kings of the line of Solomon, who for several hundred years had been banished to Shoa. Tecla Haimanout, founder of the monastery of Debra Libanos, a saint, and the last Abyssinian that enjoyed the dignity of Abuna, had the address and influence to bring about this revolution, or resignation, and to restore the ancient line of kings. A treaty was made, under guarantee of the Abuna, that large portions of Lasta should be given to this prince of the house of Zague, free from all tribute, tax, or service whatever, and that he should be regarded as an independent prince. The treaty being concluded, the prince of Zague was put in possession of his lands, and was called Y'Lasta Hatze, which signifies, not the king *of* Lasta, but the king *at* or *in* Lasta *. He resigned the throne, and Icon Amlac, of the line of Solomon, by the queen of Saba, continued the succession of princes of that house.

That treaty, greatly to the honour of the contracting parties, made towards the end of the 13th century, had remained inviolate till the middle of the 18th; no affront or injustice had been offered to the prince of Zague, and in the number of rebellions which had happened, by princes setting up their claims to the crown, none had ever proceeded, or in any shape been abetted, by the house of Zague, even though Lasta had been so frequently in rebellion.

* Nearly the same distinction as the silly one made in Britain, between the French king, and the king of France.

As Joas was a young prince, now for the first time in the province of Begemder, and passing not far from his domains, the prince of Zague thought it a proper civility and duty to salute the king in his passage, and congratulate him upon his accession to the throne of his father. He accordingly presented himself to Joas in the habit of peace, while, according to treaty, his kettle drums, or nagareets, were silver, and the points of his guards' spears of that metal also. The king received him with great cordiality and kindness; treated him with the utmost respect and magnificence; refused to allow him to prostrate himself on the ground, and forced him to sit in his presence. Michael went still farther; upon his entering his tent he uncovered himself to his waist, in the same manner as he would have done in presence of Joas. He received him standing, obliged him to sit in his own chair, and excused himself for using the same liberty of sitting, only on account of his own lameness.

The king halted one entire day to feast this royal guest. He was an old man, of few words, but those very inoffensive, lively, and pleasant; in short, Ras Michael, not often accustomed to fix on favourites at first sight, was very much taken with this Lasta sovereign. Magnificent presents were made on all sides; the prince of Zague took his leave and returned; and the whole army was very much pleased and entertained, at this specimen of the good faith and integrity of their kings.

He had now considerably advanced through his own country, Lasta, which was in the rear, when he was met by Allo Fasil, returning from his plundering the low country of Begemder, who, without provocation, from motives of pride or avarice, fell unawares upon the innocent old man, whose attendants, secure, as they thought, under public faith, and accoutred

for parade and not for defence, became an easy sacrifice, the prince being the first killed by Allo Fasil's own hand.

Fasil continued his march to join the king, beating his silver kettle-drums as in triumph. The day after, Ras Michael, uninformed of what had passed, inquired who that was, marching with a nagareet in his rear? as it is not allowed to any other person but governors of provinces, to use that instrument; and they had already reached the camp. The truth was presently told; at which the Ras shewed the deepest compunction. The tents were already pitched, when Fasil arrived, who, riding into Michael's tent, as is usual with officers returning from an expedition, began to brag of his own deeds, and upbraided Michael, in a strain of mockery, that he was old, lame, and impotent.

This raillery, though very common on such occasions, was not then in season; and the last part of the charge against him was the most offensive, for there was no man more fond of the sex than Michael was. The Ras, therefore, ordered his attendants to pull Fasil off his horse, who, seeing that he was fallen into a scrape, fled to the king's tent for refuge, with violent complaints against Michael. The king undertook to reconcile him to the Ras, and sent the young Armenian, commander of the black horse, to desire Michael to forgive Allo Fasil. This he absolutely refused to do, alleging, that the passing over Fasil's insolence to himself would be of no use, as his life was forfeited for the death of the prince of Zague.

The king renewed his request by another messenger; for the Armenian excused himself from going, by saying boldly to the king, "That, by the law of all nations, the murderer should die." To the second request, the king added, that he required only his for-

giveness of his insolence to him, not of the death of the prince of Zague, as he would direct what should be done when the nearest of kin claimed the satisfaction of retaliation. To this Ras Michael shortly replied, "I am here to do justice to every one, and will do it without any consideration or respect of persons." And it was now, for the first time, Abyssinia saw a king solicit the life of a subject of his own, from one of his own servants, and be refused.

The king, upon this, ordered Allo Fasil to defend himself; and things being upon this footing, the affair was likely to end in oblivion, though not in forgiveness. But, a very short time after, the prince of Zague's eldest son came privately to Michael's tent in the night; and, the next morning, when the judges were in his tent, Michael sent his door-keeper (Hagos) reckoned the bravest and most fortunate in combat, of any private man in the army, and to whom he trusted the keeping of his tent-door, to order Allo Fasil to answer at the instance of the prince of Zague, then waiting him in court, Why he had murdered the prince his father? Fasil was astonished, and refused to come: being again cited in a regular manner by Hagos, he seemed desirous to avail himself of the king's permission to defend himself, and call together his friends. Hagos, without giving him time, thrust him through with a lance; then cut off his head, and carried it to Michael's tent, repeating what had passed, and the reason of his killing him.

As a refusal in all such instances, is rebellion, this had passed according to rule. A party of Tigrans was ordered to plunder his tent; and all the ill-got spoils which he had gained from the poor inhabitants of Begemder were abandoned to the soldiers. Fasil's head was given to the prince of Zague, as a reparation for the treaty being violated; the silver nagareet and

spears were returned; and, highly as this affair had been carried by Ras Michael, the king never after mentioned a word of it. But this was universally allowed to be the first cause of their disagreement.

Mariam Barea, seeing no other way to save his province from ruin, but by bringing the affair to a short issue, resolved likewise to keep his promise. He retired to Nefas Musa, and encamped in the farthest limits of his province: behind this are the Woolo Galla, relations of Amitzo the king's parents. Joas and Ras Michael followed him without delay, and, having called in all the out-posts, both sides prepared for engagement.

About nine in the morning, Mariam Barea presented his army in order of battle. Michael had given orders to Kefla Yasous, and Welleta Michael, how to form his. He then mounted his mule and with some of his officers, rode out to view Mariam Barea's disposition. The king, anxious about the fortune of the day, and terrified at some reports that had been made him, by timid or unskilful people, of the warlike countenance of Mariam Barea's army, sent to the Ras, whom he saw reconnoitring, to know his opinion of what was likely to happen. "Tell the king," says the veteran, "that a young man like him, fighting with a subject so infinitely below him, with an army double his number, should give him fair play for his life and reputation. He should send to Mariam Barea to increase the strength of his centre, by placing the troops of Lasta there, or we shall beat him in half an hour, without either honour to him or to ourselves." The king, however, did not understand that sort of gallantry; he thought half an hour in suspense was long enough, and he ordered immediately a large body of musquetry to reinforce Fasil, who commanded the centre, and thereby he weakened his own left wing.

Michael, who commanded the right of the royal army, had placed himself and his fire-arms in very rough ground, where cavalry could not approach him, and where he fired as from a citadel, and soon obliged the left wing of the rebels to retreat. But the king, Kefla Yasous, and Lubo on the left, were roughly handled by the horse of Lasta, and would have been totally defeated, the king and Lubo having already left the field, had not Kefla Yasous brought up a reinforcement of the men of Sire and Temben, and retrieved the day, at least brought things upon an equal footing.

Fasil, with the horse of Foggora and Damot, and a prodigious body of the Djawi and Pagan Galla, desirous to shew his consequence, and confirm himself in his ill-got government, by his personal behaviour, attacked the Begemder horse in the centre so irresistibly, that he not only broke through them in several places, but threw the whole body into a shameful flight. Mariam Barea himself was wounded in endeavouring to stop them, and hurried away, in spite of his inclination, crying out in great agony, "Is there not one in my army, that will stay and see me die like the son of Kasmati Ayo?" It was all in vain; Powussen, and a number of his own officers, surrounded him, and dragged him, as it were by force, out of the field. The country behind Nefas Musa is wild, and cut with deep gullies, and the woods almost impenetrable; they were therefore quickly out of the enemy's pursuit, and safe, as they thought, under the protection of the Woolla Galla. The whole army of Begemder was dispersed, and Michael early forbade further pursuit.

The account of the battle, and what preceded it, from the murder of the prince of Zague, is not in the annals nor history of Abyssinia, which I have hitherto followed; at least it has not appeared yet; probably

out of delicacy to Ozoro Esther, fear of Ras Michael, and respect to the character of Mariam Barea, whose memory is still dear to his country. But the whole was often, at my desire, repeated to me by Kefla Yasous, and his officers who were there, whom he used to question about any circumstance he did not himself remember, or was absent from; for he was a scrupulous lover of truth; and nothing pleased him so much, as the thought that I was writing his history to be read in my country, although he had not the smallest idea of England or its situation.

As for the conversation before the battle, it was often told me by Ayto Aylo and Ayto Engedan, sons of Kasmati Eshte, who were with the Ras when he delivered the message to the king, and were kept by him from engaging that day in respect to Mariam Barea, who was married to their aunt Ozoro Esther.

The king and Lubo sent Woosheka to their friends among the Woollo, who delivered up the unfortunate Mariam Barea, with twelve of his officers who had taken refuge with him. Mariam Barea was brought before the king in his tent, covered with blood that had flowed from his wound; his hands tied behind his back, and thus thrown violently with his face to the ground. A general murmur, which followed, shewed the sentiments of the spectators at so woeful a sight; and the horror of it seemed to have seized the king so entirely, as to deprive him of all other feeling.

I have often said, the Mosaical law, or law of retaliation, is constantly observed over all Abyssinia, as the criminal law of the country; so that, when any person is slain wrongfully by another, it does not belong to the king to punish that offence, but the judges deliver the offender to the nearest relation of the person murdered, who has the full power of putting him to death,

selling him to slavery, or pardoning him without any satisfaction.

Lubo saw the king relenting, and that the greatest crime, that of rebellion, was already forgiven. He stood up, therefore, and, in violent rage, laid claim to Mariam Barea as the murderer of his brother: the king still saying nothing, he and his other Galla hurried Mariam Barea to his tent, where he was killed, according to report, with sundry circumstances of private cruelty, afterwards looked upon as great aggravations. Lubo, with his own hand, is said to have cut his throat in the manner they kill sheep. His body was afterwards disfigured with many wounds, and his head severed and carried to Michael, who forbade uncovering it in his tent. It was then sent to Brulhe's family, in their own country, as a proof of the satisfaction his friends had obtained; and this gave more universal umbrage than did even the cruelty of the execution.

Several officers of the king's army, seeing the bloody intentions of the Galla, advised Powussen, and the eleven other officers that were taken prisoners, to make the best use of the present opportunity, and fly to the tent of Michael and implore his protection. This they most willingly did, with the connivance of Woosheka, who had been intrusted with the care of them; and Lubo, having finished Mariam Barea, came to the king's tent to seek the unhappy prisoners, whom he intended as victims to the memory of Brulhe likewise. Hearing, however, that they were fled to Michael's tent, he sent Woosheka to demand them; but that officer had scarce opened his errand, in the gentlest manner possible, when Michael, in a fury, cried out, Cut him in pieces before the tent-door! Woosheka was indeed lucky enough to escape; but we

shall find this was not forgotten, for his punishment was more than doubled soon afterwards.

At seeing Mariam Barea's head in the hands of a Galla, after forbidding him to expose it in his tent, Michael is said to have made the following observation: "Weak and cowardly people are always in proportion cruel and unmerciful. If Brulhe's wife had done this, I could have forgiven her; but for Joas, a young man, and a king, whose heart should be opened and elated with a first victory, to be partaker with the Galla, the enemies of his country, in the murder of a nobleman such as Mariam Barea, it is a prodigy, and can be followed by no good to himself or the state; and I am much deceived, if the day is not at hand when he shall curse the moment that ever a Galla crossed the Nile, and look for a man such as Mariam Barea, but shall not find him." And, indeed, Michael was very well entitled to make this prophecy, for he knew his own heart, and the designs he had now ready to put in execution.

It is no wonder that these free communications gave the king reason to distrust Michael. And it was observed, that Waragna Fasil had insinuated himself far into his favour: his late behaviour at the battle of Nefas Musa, had greatly increased his importance with the king; and the number of troops he had now with him, made Joas think himself independent of the Ras. Fasil had brought with him near 30,000 men, about 20,000 of whom were horsemen, wild Pagan Galla, from Bizamo and other nations south of the Nile. The terror these savages occasioned in the countries through which they passed, and the great disorders they committed, gave Ras Michael a pretence to insist, that all those wild Galla should be sent back to their own country. I say this was a pretence, because Michael's soldiers were really more cruel and licen-

tious, because more confident and better countenanced, than these strangers were. But the war was over, the armies to be disbanded, these Pagans were consequently to return home; and they were all sent back accordingly, excepting 12,000 Djawi, men of Fasil's own tribe, and some of the best horse of Maitsha, Agowmidre, and Damot.

This was the first appearance of quarrel between Fasil and Ras Michael. But other accidents followed fast that blew up the flame betwixt them; of which the following was by much the most remarkable, and the most unexpected.

At Nefas Musa, near the field of battle, was a house of Mariam Barea, which he used to remove to when he was busy in wars with the neighbouring Galla. It was surrounded with meadows, perfectly well-watered, and full of luxuriant grass. Fasil, for the sake of his cavalry, had encamped in these meadows; or, if he had other views, they are not known; and, though all the doors and entrances of the house were shut, yet within was the unfortunate Ozoro Esther, by this time informed of her husband's death, and with her was Ayto Aylo, a nobleman of great credit, riches, and influence. He had been at the campaign of Sennaar, and was so terrified at the defeat, that, on his return, he had renounced the world, and turned monk. He was a man of no party, and refused all posts, and employments; but was so eminent for wisdom, that all sides consulted him, and were in some measure governed by him.

This person, a relation of the Iteghe's, had, at her desire, attended Ozoro Esther to Nefas Musa, but, adhering to his vow, went not to battle with her husband. Hearing, however, of the bad disposition of the king, the cruelty of the Galla, and the power and ambition of Fasil, whose soldiers were encamped a-

round the house, he told her that there was only one resolution which she could take to avoid sudden ruin, that of being made a sacrifice to one of the murderers of her husband.

This princess, under the fairest form, had the courage and decision of a Roman matron, worthy the wife of Mariam Barea, to whom she had borne two sons. Instructed by Aylo, early in the morning, all covered from head to foot, accompanied by himself, and many attendants and friends, their heads bare, and without appearance of disguise, they presented themselves at the door of Michael's tent, and were immediately admitted. Aylo announced the princess to the Ras, and she immediately threw herself at his feet on the ground.

As Michael was lame, though, in all respects, healthy and vigorous, and unprepared for so extraordinary an interview, it was some time before he could get upon his feet, and uncover himself before his superior. This being at last accomplished, and Ozoro Esther refusing to rise, Aylo, in a few words, told the Ras her resolution was to give him instantly her hand, and throw herself under his protection, as that of the only man not guilty of Mariam Barea's death, who could save her and her children from the bloody cruelty and insolence of the Galla that surrounded her. Michael, sanguine as he was in his expectations of the fruit he was to reap from his victory, did not expect so soon so fair a sample of what was to follow.

To decide well, instantly upon the first view of things, was a talent Michael possessed superior to any man in the kingdom. Though Ozoro Esther had never been part of his schemes, he immediately saw the great advantage which would accrue to him by making her so, and he seized it; and he was certain also

that the king, in his present disposition, would soon interfere. He lifted Ozoro Esther, and placed her upon his seat; sent for Kefla Yasous and his other officers, and ordered them, with the utmost expedition, to draw up his army in order of battle, as if for a review to ascertain his loss. At the same time, he sent for a priest, and ordered separate tents to be pitched for Ozoro Esther, and her household. All this was performed quickly; then meeting her with the priest, he was married to her at the door of his own tent, in the midst of his acclamations of his whole army. The occasion of these loud shouts was soon carried to the king, and was the first account he had of this marriage. He received the information with violent displeasure, which he could not stifle, nor refrain from expressing in the severest terms, all of which were carried to Ras Michael by officious persons, almost as soon as they were uttered, and nothing softened.

The effects of the marriage of Ozoro Esther very soon appeared in an inveterate and determined hatred against the Galla. Esther, who could not save Mariam Barea, sacrificed herself that she might avenge his death, and live to see the loss of her husband expiated by hecatombs of his enemies and murderers. Mild, gentle, and compassionate, as, from my own knowledge, she certainly was, her nature was totally changed when she reflected on the sufferings of her husband; nor could she ever be satisfied with vengeance for those sufferings, but constantly stimulated Ras Michael, of himself much inclined to shed blood, to extirpate, by every possible means, that odious nation, by whom she had fallen from all her hopes of happiness.

Fasil, as being a Galla, the first man that broke through the horse of Begemder, and wounded and put to flight her husband Mariam Barea, was in con-

sequence in the blackest list of her enemies. He, too, had murdered Kasmati Esbte, who was her favourite uncle, fast friend to Mariam Barea, and the man that had promoted her marriage with him.

The great credit of Fasil with the king had now given Ras Michael violent jealousy. These causes of hatred accumulated every day, so that Michael had already formed a resolution to destroy Fasil, even though the king should perish with him. In these sentiments, too, was Gusho of Amhara, a man of personal merit, of whose father, Ras Woodage, we have already spoken, who had filled successively all the great offices in the last reign. He was extremely rich; had married a daughter of Ras Michael, and afterwards six or seven other women, being much addicted to the fair sex, and lately married to Ozoro Welleta Israel, the Iteghe's daughter. Nor was he in any shape an enemy to wine; but very engaging, and plausible in discourse and behaviour: in many respects a good officer, careful of his men, but said to be little solicitous about his word, or promise, to men of any other profession but that of a soldier.

An accident of the most trifling kind brought about an open breach between the king and the Ras, which never after was healed. The weather was very hot while the army was marching. One day, a little before their arrival at Gondar, in passing over the vast plain between the mountains and the lake Tzana, (afterwards the scene of much bloodshed) Ras Michael, a little indisposed with the heat, and the sun, at the same time, affecting his eyes, which were weak, without any design but that of shading them, had thrown a white cloth, or handkerchief, over his head. This was told the king, then with Fasil in the centre, who immediately sent to the Ras to inquire what was the

meaning of that novelty, and upon what account he presumed to cover his head in his presence? The white handkerchief was immediately taken off, but the affront was thought so heinous as never after to admit of atonement.

It must be here observed, that, when the army is in the field, it is a distinction the king uses, to bind a broad fillet of fine muslin round his head, which is tied in a double knot, and hangs in two long ends behind. This, too, is worn by the governor of a province when he is first introduced into it; and, in absence of the king, is the mark of supreme power, either direct, or delegated, in the person that wears it.

Unless on such occasions, no one covers his head in presence of the king, nor in sight of the house, or palace, where the king resides: But it was not thought, that, being at such a distance in the rear, the Ras was in the king's presence, nor that what was caused by infirmity was to be construed into presumption, or weighed by the nice scale of jealous prerogative.

The army returned to the vallies below Gondar, and encamped separately there, Fasil upon the river Kahha, and Ras Michael on the Angrab. Gusho was on the right of Michael and left of Fasil, a little higher up the Kahha, near Koscam, the Iteghe's palace; but he was on the opposite side of the river from Fasil, where he had a house of his own, and several large meadows adjoining. Gusho's servants and soldiers now began cutting their master's grass, and were soon joined by a number of Fasil's people, who fell, without ceremony, to the same employment. An interruption was immediately attempted; a fray ensued, and several were killed, or wounded, on both sides; but, at last, Fasil's people were beat back to their quarters.

Gusho complained to Ras Michael of this violation of his property; and he being now in Gondar, and holding the office of Ras, was, without doubt, the superior and regular judge of both, as they were both out of their provinces, and immediately in Michael's. Upon citation, Fasil declared, that he would submit to no such jurisdiction; and, the case being referred to the judges next day, it was found unanimously in council, that Ras Michael was in the right, and that Fasil was guilty of rebellion. A proclamation in consequence was made at the palace-gate, superseding Fasil in his government of Damot, and in every other office which he held under the king, and appointing Boro de Gago in his place, a man of great interest in Damot and Gojam, and with the Galla on both sides of the Nile, and married to a sister of Kasmati Eshte's, by another mother, otherwise a man of small capacity.

Fasil, after a long and private audience of the king in the night, decamped early in the morning with his army, and sat down at Azaza, the high road between Damot and Gondar, and there he intercepted all the provisions coming from the southward to the capital. It happened that the house in Gondar, where Ras Michael lived, was but a small distance from the palace, a window of which opened so directly to it, that Michael, when sitting in judgment, could be distinctly seen from thence. One day, when most of his servants had left him, a shot was fired into the room from this window of the palace, which, though it missed Michael, wounded a dwarf, who was standing before him fanning the flies off his face, so grievously, that the page fell and expired at the foot of his master. This was considered as the beginning of hostilities. Nobody knew from whose hand the shot came; but the window from which it was aimed sufficiently shewed, that if it was not by direction, it must

at least have been fired with the knowledge of the king.

Joas lost no time, but removed and encamped at Tedda, and sent Woosheka to Michael with orders to return to Tigre, and not to see his face; and, at the same time, declared Lubo governor of Begemder and Amhara. The Ras scarcely could be brought to see Woosheka; but did not deign to give any further answer than this, "That the king should know, that the proper persons to correspond with him as Ras, upon the affairs of the kingdom, were the judges of the town, or of the palace; not a slave, like Woosheka, whose life, as well as that of the Galla in the king's presence, was forfeited by the laws of the land. He cautioned him from appearing again in his presence, for if he did, that he should surely die."

The next day a message came from the king, by four judges, forbidding the Ras again to drink of either the Angrab, or the Kahha, but to strike his tents and return to Tigre, upon pain of incurring his highest displeasure.—To this Michael answered, "That, true is was, his province was Tigre, but that he was now governor of the whole realm; that he was an extraordinary officer, called to prevent the ruin of the country, because, confessedly, the king could not do it; that the reason of his coming existed to that day; and he was very willing to submit to the judges for their solemn opinion, whether the kingdom, at present in the hands of the Galla, was not in more danger from the power of those Galla than it was from the constitutional influence of Mariam Barea. He added, that he expected the king should be ready to march against Fasil, for which purpose he was to decamp on the morrow." The king returned an absolute refusal to march: The Ras, thereupon, made proclamation for all the Galla, of every denomination, to leave the capi-

tal, the next day, upon pain of death, declaring them outlawed, and liable to be slain by the first that met them, if, after twenty-four hours, they were found in Gondar, or its neighbourhood, or, after ten days, in any part of the kingdom. After this, accompanied by Gusho, he decamped to dislodge Fasil from the strong post which he held at Azazo.

By the king's refusal to march with Ras Michael in person, it was supposed that his household troops would not join, but remain with him to garrison his palace. Joas, however, was too far decided in favour of Fasil to remain neuter. Michael had encamped the 21st of April in the evening, on the side of the hill above Azazo, in a very rough and rocky ground, as unfavourable for Fasil's horse as the slope it had was favourable for Michael's musquetry.

The battle was fought on the 22d, in the morning, and there was much blood shed for the time that it lasted. A nephew of Michael, and his old Fit-Auraris, Netcho, were both slain, and Fasil was totally defeated. The Galla, who had come from the other side of the Nile, were very much terrified at Michael's fire-arms, which contained what they called the zibib, or grape, meaning thereby the ball. Fasil returned quickly to Damot, to collect and increase another army, and to try his fortune after the rains.

It happened, unfortunately, that among the prisoners taken at Azazo were some of the king's black horse. These being his slaves, and subject only to his command, sufficiently shewed by whose authority they came there. They were, therefore, all called before Michael; two of them were first interrogated, whether the king had sent them or not? and, upon their denying, or refusing to give an answer, their throats were cut before their companions. The next questioned was a page of the king, who seeing, from

the fate of his friends, what was to follow his denial, frankly told the Ras, that it was by the king's special orders they, and a considerable body of the household troops, had joined Fasil the night before; and further, that it was the Armenian, who, by the king's order, had fired at him, and killed the dwarf, who was fanning the flies from him.

Upon this information all the prisoners were dismissed. The army returned the same night to Gondar, and, though they had been fasting all day, a council was held, which sat till very late, at the rising of which a messenger was dispatched to Wechne for Hatze Hannes, who was brought to the foot of the mountain the next day. In the same night Shalaka Becro, Nebrit Tecla, and his two sons, Lika Netcho, and his two sons, and a monk of Tigre, called Welleta Christos, were sent to the palace to murder the king, which they easily accomplished, having found him alone. They buried him in the church of St Raphael, as we shall find from the regicide's own confession, when he was apprehended, when we shall relate the particulars.

At the same time Michael exhibited a strange contrast in his behaviour to the Armenian, who had fled to the house of the Abuna for refuge. He sent and took him thence, and banished him from Abyssinia; but so considerately, that he dispatched a servant with him to Masuah to furnish him with necessaries, to see him embark, and save him from the cruelty and extortions of the Naybe.

HANNES II.

1769.

Hannes, brother to Bacuffa, chosen king—Is brought from Wechne—Crowned at Gondar—Refuses to march against Fasil—Is poisoned by order of Ras Michael.

HANNES, a man past seventy years of age, made his entry into Gondar, the 3d of May, 1769*. He was brother to Bacuffa, and having in his time escaped from the mountain, and been afterwards taken, his hand was cut off by order of the king, his brother, and he was sent back to the place of his confinement.

It is a law of Abyssinia, as we have already observed, derived from that of Moses, that no man can be capable either of the throne, or priesthood, unless he be perfect in all his limbs; the want of a hand, therefore, certainly disqualified Hannes, and it was with that intent it had been cut off. When this was objected to him in council, Michael laughed violently, and turned it into ridicule; "What is it that a king has to do with his hands? Are you afraid he shall not be able to saddle his own mule, or load his own baggage? Never fear that; when he is under any such

* Hannes was the second son of Yasous the Great, by his celebrated mistress Ozoro Keduste, the mother of David IV.—E.

difficulty, he has only to call upon me *, and I will help him."

Hannes, besides his age, was very feeble in strength; and having had no conversation but with monks and priests, this had debilitated his mind as much as age had done his body. He could not be persuaded to take any share in government. The whole day was spent in psalms and prayers; but Ras Michael had brought from the mountain with him two sons, Tecla Haimanout the eldest, a prince of fifteen years of age, and the younger, called George, about thirteen.

Guebra Denghel, a nobleman of the first family in Tigre, had married a daughter of Michael, by one of his wives in that province. By her he had one daughter, Welleta Selasse, whom Michael, in the beginning, while Joas and he were yet friends, had destined to be queen, and to be married to him. Hannes was of the age only to need a Shunnamite; and Welleta Selasse, young and beautiful, and who merited to be something more, was destined as this sacrifice to the ambition of her grandfather. A kind of marriage, I believe, was therefore made, but never consummated. She lived with Hannes some months in the palace, but never took any state upon her. She was a wife and a queen merely in name and idea. Love had, in that frozen composition, as little share as ambition; and those two great temptations, a crown and a beautiful mistress, could not animate Hatze Hannes to take the field to defend them. Every possible method was taken by Michael to overcome his reluctance, and to do away his fears. All was vain; he wept, hid himself, turned monk, demanded to be sent

* What made the ridicule here was, Michael was older than the king, and could not stand alone.

again to Wechne; but absolutely refused marching with the army.

Michael, who had already seen the danger of leaving a king behind him while he was in the field, finding Hannes inexorable, had recourse to poison, which was given him in his breakfast; and the Ras, by this means, in less than six months became the deliberate murderer of his two sovereigns.

TECLA HAIMANOUT II.

1769.

Succeeds his Father Hannes—His Character and prudent Behaviour—Cultivates Michael's Friendship—Marches willingly against Fasil—Defeats him at Fagitta—Description of that Battle.

Tecla Haimanout succeeded his father. He was a prince of a most graceful figure, tall for his age, rather thin, and of the whitest shade of Abyssinian colour, for such are all those princes that are born in the mountain. He was not so dark in complexion as a Neapolitan or Portugueze, had a remarkably fine forehead, large black eyes, but which had something very stern in them, a straight nose, rather of the largest, thin lips, and small mouth, very white teeth and long hair. His features, even in Europe, would have been thought fine. He was particularly careful of his hair, which he dressed in a hundred different ways. Though he had been absent but a very few months from his native mountain, his manners and carriage were those of a prince, that had sat from his infancy on an hereditary throne. He had an excellent understanding, and prudence beyond his years. He was said to be naturally of a very warm temper, but this he had so

perfectly subdued, as scarcely ever to have given an instance of it in public. He entered into Ras Michael's views entirely, and was as forward to march out against Fasil, as his father had been averse to it.

From the time of the accession of Hannes to the throne, Tecla Haimanout called Michael by the name of father; and during the few slight sicknesses the Ras had, he laid by all his state, and attended him with an anxiety well becoming a son. At this time I entered Abyssinia, and arrived in Masuah, where there was a rumour only of Hatze Hannes's illness.

The army marched out of Gondar on the 10th of November 1769, taking the route of Azazo and Dingleber. Fasil was at Bure, and had assembled a large force from Damot, Agow, and Maitsha. But Welleta Yasous, his principal officer, had brought together a still larger one, from the wild nations of Galla beyond the Nile; and this not without some difficulty. The zibib, or bullet, which had destroyed so many of them at Azazo, had made an impression on their minds, and been reported by their countrymen as a circumstance very unpleasing. These wild Pagans, on that account, had, for the first time, found a reluctance to invade their ancient enemies, the Abyssinians.

Fasil, to overcome this fear of the zibib, had loaded some guns with powder, and fired them very near at some of his friends, which of course hurt nobody. Again he had put ball in his gun, and fired at cattle afar off; and these being for the most part slightly wounded, he inferred from thence that the zibib was fatal only at a distance, but that if they galloped resolutely to the mouth of the gun, the grape could do no more than the first gun he fired with powder had done to those he had aimed at.

As soon as Fasil heard that Michael was on his march, he left Bure and advanced to meet him, his

wish being to fight him, if possible, before he should enter into those rich provinces of the Agows, whence he drew the maintenance of his army, and expected tribute. Michael's conduct warranted this precaution. For no sooner had he entered Fasil's government, than he laid waste Maitsha, destroying every thing with fire and sword. The old general, indeed, being perfectly acquainted with the country, and with the enemy he was to engage, had already fixed upon his field of battle, and measured the stations that would conduct him thither.

Instead of taking up the time, after the two first days, with spreading the desolation he had begun, by forced marches he came to Fagitta, considerably earlier than Fasil expected. This field that Michael had chosen was rocky, uneven, and full of ravines in one part, and of plain smooth turf on the other, which divisions were separated by a brook full of large stones.

The Nile was on Ras Michael's left, and in this rugged ground he stationed his lances and musquetry; for he never made great account of his horse. Two large churches, St Michael and St George, planted thick with cedars, and about half a mile distant from each other, were on his right and left flanks, or rather advanced farther before his front. A deep valley communicated with the most level of these plains, descending gently all the way from the celebrated sources of the Nile, which were not more than half a day's journey distant. Michael drew up his army behind the two churches, which were advanced on his right and left flanks, and among the cedars of these he planted 500 musqueteers before each church, whom the trees perfectly concealed; he formed his horse in front, knowing them to be an object the Galla did not fear, and likely to lead them on to charge

rashly. These he gave the command of to a very active and capable officer, Wundy Powussen of Begemder, one of those eleven servants of Mariam Barea, whose lives Michael saved, by protecting them in his tent after the battle of Nefas Musa. He had directed this officer, with a few horse, to scour the small plain as soon as he saw the Galla advancing into it from the valley.

As soon as the sun became hot, Fasil's wild Galla poured into the plain; and they had now occupied the greatest part of it, which was not large enough to contain his whole army, when their skirmishing began, by their driving Powussen before them, who fled apparently in great confusion, crossed the brook, and joined the horse, and formed nearly between the churches. The Galla, desirous to pursue, were impeded by the great stones, so that they were in a crowd at the passage of the brook

Ayto Welleta Gabriel, factor to Ozoro Esther, was intoxicated with liquor; but he was a brave man, very active and strong, and of a good understanding; though, according to a custom among them, he, at times, to divert the Ras, played the part of a buffoon. In this character, with his musket only in his hand, he, though on foot, skirmished in the middle of a party of Powussen's horse. When they turned to fly, Welleta Gabriel found it convenient to do so likewise; and he crossed the brook without looking behind him. Upon turning round, he saw the Galla halt, as if in council in the bed of the rivulet, and, taking up his gun as in a bravado, he levelled at the crowd, and had the fortune to hit the principal man among them, who fell dead among the feet of the horses.

A small pause ensued; the cry of the Zibib! the Zibib! immediately began, and a downright confusion and flight followed. The Galla, already upon the plain,

turned upon those coming out of the valley, and these again upon their companions behind them. The cry of Zibib Ali *! Zibib Ali! was repeated through the whole, spreading terror and dismay wherever it was heard. Nobody knew the misfortune that had befallen them. Welleta Yasous, who commanded the van, was carried away by the multitude flying: Fasil, who was at the head of the Damot and Agows, had not entered the valley, nor could any one tell him what was the accident in the plain.

Even Michael himself (as I have heard him say), when, sitting upon his mule on a small eminence, he saw this extraordinary confusion and retreat, was quite unable to assign any cause for it. Though no man, on these occasions, had more presence of mind, he remained for a time motionless, without giving any orders. The troops, however, that lay hid in the groves of cedars before the churches, who had been silent and attentive, and Powussen, who commanded the horse which had been skirmishing, saw distinctly the operation of Welleta Gabriel, and the confusion that had followed it; without loss of time they attacked the Galla in the valley, and were soon joined by Gusho and the rest of the army.

Fasil, in despair at a defeat of which he knew not the cause, came down among the Galla, fighting very bravely, often facing about upon those that pressed them, and endeavouring, at least, to retreat in some sort of order; but the musqueteers from the church, commanded by Hezekias, instead of entering the valley, had advanced and ascended the hills, so that from the sides of them, in the utmost security, they poured down shot upon the fliers beneath them.

* They have the grape along with them.

Fasil here lost a great part of his army; but seeing a place in one of the hills accessible, he left the valley, and ascended the side of the mountain, leading a large body of his own troops; and, having gained the smooth ground behind the musqueteers, he came up with them, whilst intent only upon annoying the Galla, and cut 300 to pieces. Content with this advantage and finding his army entirely dispersed, he passed the sources of the Nile at Geesh, descended into the plain of Assoa, and encamped near Gooderoo, a small lake there, intending to pass the night, and collect his scattered forces.

Michael's army had given over pursuit, but Powussen, with some chosen horse of Lasta and Begemder, followed Fasil upon his track, and came up with him a little before the dusk of the evening, on the side of the lake. Here a great slaughter of wounded and weary men ensued: Fasil fled, and no resistance was attempted; and the soldiers, satiated with blood, at last returned, and pursued the enemy no furthur.

It was the next day, in the evening, before Powussen joined the camp, having put to the sword, without mercy, all the stragglers that fell in the way upon his return. The appearance of this man, and his behaviour, made Michael's joy complete, who already had begun to entertain fears that some untoward accident had befallen him.

This was the battle of Fagitta, fought on the 9th of December 1769, on the very ground on which Fasil, just five years before, had murdered Kasmati Eshte. Those philosophers, who disclaim the direction of a divine Providence, will calculate how many chances there were, that, in a kingdom as big as Great Britain, the commission of a crime and its punishment, should both happen in one place, on one day, in the short space of five years, and in the life of one man.

The extraordinary severity exercised upon the army of the Galla, after the battle, was still as apparent as it had been in the flight. Woosheka, of whom we have had already occasion to speak, fell in among the horse of Powussen and Gusho, and being known, his life was spared. He was cousin-german to Lubo, but a better man and soldier than his relation; and, in all the intrigues of the Galla at Gondar, was considered as as an undesigning man, of harmless and inoffensive manners. He had been companion of Gusho, and many of the principal commanders in the army; and, after the defeat at Nefas Musa, had the guard of Powussen and the eleven officers, whom he suffered to escape into Michael's tent, as I have already said, while Lubo was murdering Mariam Barea. He had been, for a time, well known and well esteemed by Ras Michael, nor was he ever supposed personally to have offended him, or given umbrage to any one. As he was a man of some fortune and substance, it was thought the forfeiture of all that he had might more than atone for any fault that he had ever committed.

It was therefore agreed, on the morning after Powussen's return from the pursuit, that Gusho and he, when they surrendered this prisoner, should ask his life and pardon from the Ras; and this they did, prostrating themselves in the humblest manner, with their foreheads on the earth. Ras Michael, at once forgetting his own interest, and the quality and consequence of the officers before him, fell into a violent and outrageous passion against the supplicants, and, after a very short reproof, ordered each of them to their tents in a kind of disgrace.

He then sternly interrogated Woosheka, whether he did not remember, that, at Tedda, he had ordered him out of the country in ten days? Then, in his own language of Tigre, he asked, if there was any one

among the soldiers that could make a leather bottle? And being answered in the affirmative, he ordered one to be made of Woosheka's skin; but first to carry him to the king. The soldiers understood the command, though the miserable victim did not; and he was brought to the king, who would not suffer him to speak, but waved with his hand to remove him; and they accordingly carried him to the river side, where they flayed him alive, and brought his skin, stuffed with straw, to Ras Michael.

It was not doubted, that Ozoro Esther, then in the camp, had sealed the fate of this wretched victim. She appeared that night in the king's tent dressed in the habit of a bride, which she had never before done since the death of Mariam Barea. Two days after, having obtained her end, she returned triumphant to Gondar, where Providence visited her with distress in her own family, for the hardness of her heart to the sufferings of others.

During this time I was at Masuah, where, by reason of the great distance and interruption in the roads, these transactions were not yet known. Hatze Hannes was still supposed alive, and my errand from Metical Aga that of being his physician. I shall now begin an account of what passed at Masuah, and thence continue my journey to Gondar, till my meeting with the king there.

TRAVELS

TO DISCOVER

THE SOURCE OF THE NILE.

BOOK V.

ACCOUNT OF MY JOURNEY FROM MASUAH TO GONDAR—TRANSACTIONS THERE—MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE ABYSSINIANS.

CHAP. I.

Transactions at Masuah and Arkecko.

MASUAH*, which means the port or harbour of the Shepherds, is a small island immediately on the Abys-

* There is much reason to doubt the accuracy of this interpretation. Masuah is written by the Arabs and Abyssinians Matzua, which signifies the landing place or harbour: The author derives the word from Ma, "a place," and Suah or So, "a Shepherd," both of Egyptian origin. The Portuguese write it Maçua.—E.

sinian shore, having an excellent harbour, and water deep enough for ships of any size to the very edge of the island. Here they may ride in the utmost security, from whatever point, or with whatever degree of strength, the wind blows. As it takes its modern, so it received its ancient name from its harbour. It was called by the Greeks *Sebasticum Os*, from the capacity of the port, which is distributed into three divisions. The island itself is very small, scarcely three quarters of a mile in length, and about half that in breadth, one-third occupied by houses, one by cisterns to receive the rain-water, and the last is reserved for burying the dead.

Masuah, as we have already observed, was one of those towns on the west of the Red Sea, that fell after the conquest of Arabia Felix by Sinan Basha, under Selim, emperor of Constantinople. At that time it was a place of great commerce, possessing a share of the Indian trade in common with the other ports of the Red Sea near the mouth of the Indian Ocean. It had a considerable quantity of exports brought to it from a great tract of mountainous country behind it, in all ages very inhospitable, and almost inaccessible to strangers. Gold and ivory, elephants, and buffaloes' hides, and, above all, slaves, of much greater value, as being more sought after for their personal qualities than any other sort, who had the misfortune to be reduced to that condition, made the principal articles of exportation. Pearls, considerable for size, water, or colour, were found all along its coast. The great convenience of commodious riding for vessels, joined to these valuable articles of trade, had overcome the inconvenience of want of water, the principal necessary of life, to which it had been subjected from its creation.

Masuah continued a place of much resort as long as commerce flourished; but it fell into obscurity very suddenly under the oppression of the Turks, who put the finishing hand to the ruin of the India trade in the Red Sea, begun some years before by the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, and the settlements made by the Portuguese on the continent of India.

The first government of Masuah under the Turks was by a basha sent from Constantinople, and thence, for a time, the conquest of Abyssinia was attempted, always with great confidence, though never with any degree of success; so that, losing its value as a garrison, and, at the same time, as a place of trade, it was thought no longer worth while to keep up so expensive an establishment as that of a bashalik.

Their principal auxiliary, when the Turks conquered the place, was a tribe of Mahometans called *Belowee*, shepherds inhabiting the coast of the Red Sea under the mountains of the Habab, about lat. 14°. In reward for this assistance, the Turks gave their chief the civil government of Masuah and its territory, under the title of Naybe of Masuah; and, upon the basha's being withdrawn, this officer remained in fact sovereign of the place, though, to save appearances, he held it of the grand signior for an annual tribute, upon receiving a firman from the Ottoman Porte.

The body of Janizaries, once established there in garrison, were left in the island, and their pay continued from Constantinople. These marrying the women of the country, their children succeeded them in their place and pay as Janizaries; but being now, by their intermarriages, Moors, and natives of Masuah, they became, of course, relations to each other, and always subject to the influence of the Naybe.

The Naybe finding the great distance he was at from his protectors, the Turks in Arabia, on the other

side of the Red Sea, whose garrisons were every day decaying in strength, and for the most part reduced; sensible, too, how much he was in the power of the Abyssinians, his enemies and nearest neighbours, began to think that it was better to secure himself at home, by making some advances to those in whose power he was. Accordingly, it was agreed between them, that one-half of the customs should be paid by him to the king of Abyssinia, who was to suffer him to enjoy his government unmolested; for Masuah, as I have before said, is absolutely destitute of water; neither can it be supplied with any sort of provisions but from the mountainous country of Abyssinia.

The same may be said of Arkeeko, a large town on the bottom of the bay of Masuah, which has indeed water, but labours under the same scarcity of provisions; for the tract of flat land behind both, called Samhar, is a perfect desert, and only inhabited from the month of November to April, by a variety of wandering tribes, called Tora, Hazorta, Shiho, and Doba: and these carry all their cattle to the Abyssinian side of the mountains when the rains fall there, which is during the opposite six months. When the season is thus reversed, they, and their cattle, are no longer in Samhar, or the dominions of the Naybe, but in the hands of the Abyssinians, especially the governor of Tigre and the Baharnagash, who thereby, without being at the expence and trouble of marching against Masuah with an army, can make a line round it, and starve all at Arkeeko and Masuah, by prohibiting any sort of provisions to be carried thither from their side. In the course of this history we have seen this practised with great success more than once, especially against the Naybe Musa in the reign of Yasous I.

The friendship of Abyssinia once secured, and the power of the Turks declining daily in Arabia, the

Naybe began to withdraw himself by degrees from paying tribute at all to the basha of Jidda, to whose government his had been annexed by the Porte. He therefore received the firman as a mere form, and returned trifling presents, but no tribute; and in troublesome times, or when a weak government happened in Tigre, he withdrew himself equally from paying any consideration, either to the basha, in name of tribute, or to the king of Abyssinia, as a share of the customs. This was precisely his situation when I arrived in Abyssinia. A great revolution, as we have already seen, had happened in that kingdom, of which Michael had been the principal author. When he was called to Gondar and made minister there, Tigre remained drained of troops, and without a governor.

Nor was the new king, Hatze Hannes, whom Michael had placed upon the throne after the murder of Joas his predecessor, a man likely to infuse vigour into the government. Hannes was past seventy at his accession, and Michael, his minister, lame, so as scarcely to be able to stand, and within a few years of eighty. The Naybe, a man of about forty-eight, judged of the debility of the Abyssinian government by those circumstances; but in this he was mistaken.

Already Michael had intimated to him, that, the next campaign, he would lay waste Arkeeko and Masuah, till they should be as desert as the wilds of Samhar; and as he had been all his life very remarkable for keeping his promises of this kind, the stranger merchants had many of them fled to Arabia, and others to Dobarwa *, a large town in the territories of the Baharnagash. Notwithstanding this, the Naybe had not shewn any public mark of fear, nor sent one

* Supposed, from its name, to have been formerly the capital of the Dobas.

penny either to the king of Abyssinia, or the basha of Jidda.

On the other hand, the basha was not indifferent to his own interest; and, to bring about the payment, he had made an agreement with an officer of great credit with the Sheriffe of Mecca. This man was originally an Abyssinian slave, his name Metical Aga, who by his address had raised himself to the post of Selictar, or sword-bearer, to the Sheriffe; and, in fact, he was absolute in all his dominions. He was, moreover, a great friend of Michael, governor of Tigre, and had supplied him with large stores of arms and ammunition for his last campaign against the king at Gondar.

The basha had employed Metical Aga to inform Michael of the treatment he had received from the Naybe, desiring his assistance to force him to pay the tribute, and at the same time intimated to the Naybe, that he not only had done so, but the very next year would give orders throughout Arabia to arrest the goods and persons of such Mahometan merchants as should come to Arabia, either from motives of religion or trade. With this message he had sent the firman from Constantinople, desiring the return both of tribute and presents.

Mahomet Gibberti, Metical Aga's servant, had come in the boat with me; but Abdelcader, who carried the message and firman, and who was governor of the island of Dahalac, had sailed at the same time with me, and had been spectator of the honour which was paid to my ship when she left the harbour of Jidda.

Running straight over to Masuah, Abdelcader had proclaimed what he had seen with great exaggeration, according to the custom of his country; and reported that a prince was coming, a very near relation of the

king of England, who was no trader, but came only to visit countries and people.

It was many times, and carefully agitated (as we knew afterwards) between the Naybe and his counsellors, what was to be done with this prince. Some were for the most expeditious, and what has long been the customary, method of treating strangers in Masuah, to put them to death, and divide every thing they had among the garrison. Others insisted, that they should stay and see what letters I had from Arabia to Abyssinia, lest this might prove an addition to the storm just ready to break upon them, on the part of Metical Aga and Michael Suhul.

But Achmet, the Naybe's nephew, said, it was folly to doubt but that a man of my description would have protections of every kind; but whether I had or not, that my very rank should protect me in every place where there was any government whatever; it might do even among banditti and thieves, inhabiting woods and mountains; that a sufficient quantity of strangers' blood had been already shed at Masuah, for the purpose of rapine, and he believed a curse and poverty had followed it; that it was impossible for those, who had heard the firing of those ships, to conjecture whether I had letters to Abyssinia or not; that it would be better to consider whether I was held in esteem by the captains of those ships, as half of the guns they fired in compliment to me, was sufficient to destroy them all, and lay Arkeeko and Masuah, as desolate as Michael Suhul had threatened to do; nor could that vengeance cost any of the ships, coming next year to Jidda, a day's sailing out of their way; and there being plenty of water when they reached Arkeeko, at the south-west of the bay, all this destruction might be effected in one afternoon, and re-

peated once a-year without difficulty, danger, or expence, while they were watering.

Achmet, therefore, declared it was his resolution that I should be received with marks of consideration, till upon inspecting my letters, and conversing with me, they might see what sort of a man I was, and upon what errand I came; but even if I was a trader, and no priest or Frank, such as came to disturb the peace of the country, he would not then consent to any personal injury being done me; if I was indeed a priest, or one of those Franks, they might send me to hell (Gehennim) if they chose; but he, for his part, would not, even then, have any thing to do with it.

Before our vessel appeared, they came to these conclusions; and though I have supposed that hoisting the colours and saluting me with guns had brought me into this danger, on the other hand it may be said, perhaps with greater reason, they were the means Providence kindly used to save my life in that slaughter-house of strangers.

Achmet's father had been Naybe before, and, of course, the sovereignty, upon the present incumbent's death, was to devolve on him. And what made this less invidious, the sons of the present Naybe had all been swept away by the small-pox; so that Achmet was really, at any rate, to be considered as his son and successor. Add to this, the Naybe had received a stroke of the palsy, which deprived him of the use of one of his sides, and greatly impeded his activity, unless in schemes of doing ill; for I could not perceive, when intending mischief, that he laboured under any infirmity. All this gave Achmet sovereign influence, and it was therefore agreed the rest should be only spectators, and that my fate should be left to him.

Achmet was about twenty-five years of age, or per-

haps younger; his stature near five feet four; he was feebly made, a little bent forwards, or stooping, thin, long-faced, long-necked; small, but tolerably well-limbed, agile and active enough in his motions, though of a figure by no means athletic. He had a broad forehead, thick black eye-brows, black eyes, an acquiline nose, thin lips, and fine teeth; and, what is very rare in that country, and much desired, a thick curled beard. This man was known to be very brave in his person, but exceedingly prone to anger. A near relation to the Baharnagash having said something impertinent to him while he was altering the pin of his tent, which his servant had not placed to his mind, in a passion, he struck the Abyssinian with a wooden mallet, and killed him on the spot; and although this was in the Abyssinian territory, by getting nimbly on horseback, he arrived at Arkecko without being intercepted, though closely pursued almost to the town.

On the 19th September 1769, we arrived at Masuah, very much tired of the sea, and desirous to land. But, as it was evening, I thought it advisable to sleep on board all night, that we might have a whole day (as the first is always a busy one) before us, and receive in the night any intelligence from friends, who might not choose to venture to come openly to see us in the day, at least before the determination of the Naybe had been heard concerning us.

Mahomet Gibberti, a man whom we had perfectly secured, and who was fully instructed in our suspicions as to the Naybe, and the manner in which we had resolved to behave to him, went ashore that evening; and, being himself an Abyssinian, having connections in Masuah, dispatched that same night to Adowa, the capital of Tigré, those letters which I knew were to be of the

greatest importance; giving our friend Janni (a Greek, confidential servant of Michael, governor of Tigre) advice that we were arrived, that we had letters of Metical Aga to the Naybe and Ras Michael; as also Greek letters to him from the Greek patriarch of Cairo, a duplicate of which I sent by the bearer. We wrote likewise to him in Greek, that we were afraid of the Naybe, and begged him to send us instantly some man of confidence, who might protect us, or at least would be a spectator of what would befal us. We, besides, instructed him to advise the court of Abyssinia, that we were friends of Metical Aga, had letters from him to the king and the Ras, and distrusted the Naybe of Masuah.

Mahomet Gibberti executed this commission in an instant, with all the punctuality of an honest man, who was faithful to the instructions of his master, and was independent of every person else. He applied to Mahomet Adulai (a person kept by Ras Michael as a spy upon the Naybe, and in the same character by Metical Aga); and Adulai, that very night, dispatched a trusty messenger, with many of whom he was constantly provided. This runner, charged with our dispatches, having a friend and correspondent of his own among the Shiho, passed, by ways best known to himself, and was safely escorted by his friends till the fifth day, when he arrived at the custom-house of Adowa, and there delivered our dispatches to our friend Janni.

At Cairo, as I have already mentioned, I met with my friend father Christopher, who introduced me to the Greek patriarch, Mark. This patriarch had told me, that there were of his communion, to the number of about twenty, then in Abyssinia; some of whom were good men and becoming rich in the way of trade; some had fled from the severity of the Turks, after having been detected by them in intimacy with Ma-

hometan women; but all of them were in a great degree of credit at the court of Abyssinia, and possessing places under government greatly beyond his expectation. To these he wrote letters, in the manner of bulls from the pope, enjoining them, with regard to me, to obey his orders strictly, the particulars of which I shall have occasion to speak of afterwards.

Janni, then at Adowa in Tigré, was a man of the first character for good life and morals. He had served two kings of Abyssinia with great reputation, and Michael had appointed him to the customhouse at Adowa, to superintend the affairs of the revenue there, while he himself was occupied at Gondar. To him the patriarch gave his first injunctions as to watching the motions of the Naybe, and preventing any illusage from him, before the notice of my arrival at Masuah should reach Abyssinia.

Mahomet Adulai dispatched his messenger, and Mahomet Gibberti repaired that same night to the Naybe at Arkeeko, with such diligence that lulled him asleep as to any prior intelligence, which otherwise he might have thought he was charged to convey to Tigre; and Mahomet Gibberti, in his conversation that night with Achmet, adroitly confirmed him in all the ideas he himself had first started in council with the Naybe. He told him the manner I had been received at Jidda, my protection at Constantinople, and the firman which I brought from the grand signior, the power of my countrymen in the Red Sea and India, and my personal friendship with Metical Aga. He moreover insinuated, that the coasts of the Red Sea would be in a dangerous situation if any thing happened to me, as both the sherriffe of Mecca and emperor of Constantinople would themselves, perhaps, not interfere, but would most certainly consider the place, where such disobedience should

be shewn to their commands, as in a state of anarchy, and therefore to be abandoned to the just correction of the English, if injured.

On the 20th, a person came from Mahomet Gibberti to conduct me on shore. The Naybe himself was still at Arkeeko, and Achmet therefore had come down to receive the duties of the merchandise on board the vessel which brought me. There were two elbow-chairs placed in the middle of the market-place. Achmet sat on one of them, while the several officers opened the bales and packages before him; the other chair on his left hand was empty.

He was dressed all in white, in a long Banian habit of muslin, and a close-bodied frock reaching to his ancles, much like the white frock and petticoat the young children wear in England. This species of dress did not, in any way, suit Achmet's shape or size; but, it seems, he meant to be in gala. As soon as I came in sight of him, I doubled my pace: Mahomet Gibberti's servant whispered to me, not to kiss his hand, which indeed I intended to have done. Achmet stood up, just as I arrived within arm's length of him; when we touched each other's hands, carried our fingers to our lips, then laid our hands across our breasts: I pronounced the salutation of the inferior, Salam Alicum! Peace be between us; to which he answered immediately, Alicum Salam! There is peace between us. He pointed to the chair, which I declined; but he obliged me to sit down.

In these countries, the greater honour that is shewn you at first meeting, the more considerable present is expected. He made a sign to bring coffee directly, as the immediate offering of meat or drink is an assurance your life is not in danger. He began with an air that seemed rather serious: "We have expected you here some time ago, but thought you had changed your

mind, and was gone to India."—"Since sailing from Jidda, I have been in Arabia Felix, the Gulf of Mocha, and crossed last from Loheia."—"Are you not afraid," said he, "so thinly attended to venture upon these long and dangerous voyages?"—"The countries where I have been are either subject to the emperor of Constantinople, whose firman I have now the honour to present you, or to the regency of Cairo, and port of Janizaries—here are their letters—or to the sherriffe of Mecca. To you, Sir, I present the sherriffe's letters; and, besides these, one from Metigal Aga your friend, who, depending on your character, assured me this alone would be sufficient to preserve me from ill-usage so long as I did no wrong: as for the dangers of the road from banditti and lawless persons, my servants are indeed few, but they are veteran soldiers, tried and exercised from their infancy in arms, and I value not the superior number of cowardly and disorderly persons."

He then returned me the letters, saying, "You will give these to the Naybe to-morrow; I will keep Metical's letter, as it is to me, and will read it at home." He put it accordingly in his bosom; and our coffee being done, I rose to take my leave, and was presently wet to the skin by deluges of orange-flower-water showered upon me from the right and left, by two of his attendants, from silver bottles.

A very decent house had been provided; and I had no sooner entered, than a large dinner was sent us by Achmet, with a profusion of lemons, and good fresh water, now become one of the greatest delicacies in life; and, instantly after, our baggage was all sent unopened; with which I was very well-pleased, being afraid they might break something in my clock, telescopes, or quadrant, by the violent manner in which they satisfy their curiosity.

Late at night I received a visit from Achmet; he was then in an undress, his body quite naked, a barracan thrown loosely about him; he had a pair of calico drawers; a white coul, or cotton cap, upon his head, and had no sort of arms whatever. I rose up to meet him, and thank him for his civility in sending my baggage; and when I observed, besides, that it was my duty to wait upon him, rather than suffer him to give himself this trouble, he took me by the hand, and we sat down on two cushions together.

"All that you mentioned," said he, "is perfectly good and well; but there are questions that I am going to ask you, which are of consequence to yourself. When you arrived at Jidda, we heard it was a great man, a son or brother of a king, going to India. This was communicated to me, and to the Naybe, by people that saw every day the respect paid to you by the captains of the ships at Jidda. Metical Aga, in his private letter delivered to the Naybe last night by Mahomet Gibberti, among many unusual expressions, said, The day that any accident befals this person will be looked upon by me always as the most unfortunate of my life. Now, you are a Christian, and he is a Mussulman, and these are expressions of particular regard not used by the one when writing of the other. He says, moreover, that in your firman, the grand signior styles you Bey-Adze, or Most Noble. Tell me, therefore, and tell me truly, Are you a prince, son, brother, or nephew, of a king? Are you banished from your own country? and, What is it you seek in ours, exposing yourself to so many difficulties and dangers?"

"I am neither son nor brother of a king. I am a private Englishman. If you, Sidi Achmet, saw my prince, the eldest, or any son of the king of England, you would then be able to form a juster idea of them,

and that would for ever hinder you from confounding them with common men like me. If they should choose to appear in this part of the world, this little sea would be too narrow for their ships: Your sun, now so hot, would be darkened by their sail; and when they fired their terrible wide mouthed cannon, not an Arab would think himself safe on the distant mountains, while the houses on the shore would totter and fall to the ground, as if shaken to pieces by an earthquake. I am a servant to that king, and an inferior one in rank; only worthy of his attention from my affection to him and his family, in which I do not acknowledge any superior. Yet so far your correspondents say well: My ancestors were the kings of the country in which I was born, and to be ranked among the greatest and most glorious that ever bore the crown and title of king. This is the truth, and nothing but the truth. I may now, I hope, without offence, ask, To what does all this information tend?"

"To your safety," said he, "and to your honour, as long as I command in Masuah: to your certain death and destruction if you go among the Abyssinians; a people without faith, covetous, barbarous, and in continual war, of which nobody yet has been able to discover the reason. But of this another time."

"Be it so," said I. "I would now speak one word in secret to you (upon which every body was ordered out of the room): All that you have told me this evening I already know; ask me not how: but, to convince you that it is truth, I now thank you for the humane part you took against these bloody intentions others had of killing and plundering me on my arrival, upon Abdelcader governor of Dhalac's information that I was a prince, because of the honour that

the English ships paid me, and that I was loaded with gold."

"Ullah Acbar! (in great surprise) Why, you was in the middle of the sea when that passed."

"Scarcely advanced so far, I believe; but your advice was wise, for a large English ship will wait for me all this winter in Jidda, till I know what reception I meet here, or in Abyssinia. It is a 54 gun ship; its name, the Lion; its captain, Thomas Price. I mention these particulars, that you may inquire into the truth. Upon the first news of a disaster, he would come here, and destroy Arkeeko, and this island, in a day. But this is not my business with you at present.

"It is a very proper custom, established all over the east, that strangers should make an acknowledgment for the protection they receive, and trouble they are to occasion. I have a present for the Naybe, whose temper and disposition I know perfectly—(Ullah Acbar! repeats Achmet). – I have likewise a present for you, and for the Kaya of the Janizaries; all these I shall deliver the first day I see the Naybe; but I was taught, in a particular manner, to repose upon you as my friend, and a small, but separate acknowledgement, is due to you in that character. I was told, that your agent at Jidda had been inquiring everywhere among the India ships, and at the broker of that nation, for a pair of English pistols, for which he offered a very high price; though, in all probability, those you would get would have been but ordinary, and much used; now I have brought you this separate present, a pair of excellent workmanship; here they are: My doubt, which gave rise to this long private conversation, was, whether you would take them home yourself, or, if you have a confidential servant

that you can trust, let him take them, so that it be not known; for if the Naybe"——

"I understand every thing that you say, and every thing that you would say. Though I do not know men's hearts that I never saw, as you do, I know pretty well the hearts of those with whom I live. Let the pistols remain with you, and shew them to nobody till I send you a man, to whom you may say any thing, and he shall go between you and me; for there is in this place a number of devils, not men; but *Ullah Kerim*, God is great. The person that brings you dry dates in an Indian handkerchief, and an earthen bottle to drink your water out of, give him the pistols. You may send by him to me any thing you choose. In the mean time, sleep sound, and fear no evil; but never be persuaded to trust yourself to the Cafrs of Habbesh at Masuah."

On the 20th of September, a female slave came, and brought with her the proper credentials, an Indian handkerchief full of dry dates, and a pot, or bottle, of unvarnished potter's earth, which keeps the water very cool. I had some doubt upon this change of sex; but the slave, who was an Abyssinian girl, quickly undeceived me, delivered the dates, and took away the pistols destined for Achmet, who had himself gone to his uncle, the Naybe, at Arkeeko.

On the 21st, in the morning, the Naybe came from Arkeeko. The usual way is by sea; it is about two leagues straight accross the bay, but somewhat more by land. The passage from the main is on the north side of the island, which is not above a quarter of a mile broad; there is a large cistern for rain-water on the land side, where you embark across. He was poorly attended by three or four servants, miserably mounted, and about forty naked savages on foot, armed with short lances and crooked knives.

The drum beat before him all the way from Arkeeko to Masuah. Upon entering the boat the drum on the land side ceased, and those, in what is called the castle of Masuah, began. The castle is a small clay hut, and in it one swivel gun, which is not mounted, but lies upon the ground, and is fired always with great trepidation, and some danger. The drums are earthen jars, such as they send butter in to Arabia; the mouths of which are covered with a skin, so that a stranger, on seeing two or three of these together, would run a great risk of believing them to be jars of butter, or pickles, carefully covered with oiled parchment.

All the procession was in the same style. The Naybe was dressed in an old shabby Turkish habit, much too short for him, and seemed to have been made about the time of Sultan Selim. He wore also upon his head a Turkish cowke, or high cap, which scarcely admitted any part of his head. In this dress, which on him had a truly ridiculous appearance, he received the caftan, or investiture, of the island of Masuah, and, being thereby representative of the grand signior, consented that day to be called Omar Aga, in honour of the commission.

Two standards of white silk, striped with red, were carried before him to the mosque, from whence he went to his own house to receive the compliments of his friends. In the afternoon of that day I went to pay my respects to him, and found him sitting on a large wooden elbow chair, at the head of two files of naked savages, who made an avenue from his chair to the door. He had nothing upon him but a coarse cotton shirt, so dirty, that, it seemed, all pains to clean it again would be thrown away; and so short, that it scarcely reached his knees. He was very tall and lean; his colour black; had a large mouth and nose;

in place of a beard, a very scanty tuft of grey hairs upon the point of his chin; large, dull, and heavy eyes; a kind of malicious, contemptuous, smile on his countenance; he was altogether of a most stupid brutal appearance. His character perfectly corresponded with his figure, for he was a man of mean abilities, cruel to excess, avaricious, and a great drunkard.

I presented my firman. The greatest basha in the Turkish empire would have risen upon seeing it, kissed it, and carried it to his forehead; and I really expected that Omar Aga, for the day he bore that title, and received the caftan, would have shewn this piece of respect to his master But he did not even receive it into his hand, and pushed it back to me again, saying, "Do you read it all to me, word for word."—I told him it was Turkish; that I had never learned to read a word of that language.— "Nor I either," says he; "and I believe I never shall." I then gave him Metical Aga's letter, the Sherriffe's, Ali Bey's, and the Janizaries' letters. He took them all together in both his hands, and laid them unopened beside him, saying, "You should have brought a moullah along with you. Do you think I shall read all these letters? Why, it would take me a month." And he glared upon me with his mouth open, so like an idiot, that it was with the utmost difficulty I kept my gravity, only answering, "Just as you please; you know best."

He affected at first not to understand Arabic; spoke by an interpreter in the language of Masuah, which is a dialect of Tigre; but seeing I understood *him* in this, he spoke Arabic, and spoke it well.

A silence followed this short conversation, and I took the opportunity to give him his present, with which he did not seem displeased, but rather that it was below him to tell me so; for, without saying a word about it, he asked me, "Where the Abuna of

Habbesh was? And why he tarried so long?" I said, "The wars in Upper Egypt had made the roads dangerous;" and, it was easy to see, Omar longed much to settle accounts with him.

I took my leave of the Naybe, very little pleased with my reception, and the small account he seemed to make of my letters, or of myself; but heartily satisfied with having sent my dispatches to Janni, now far out of his power.

The inhabitants of Masuah were dying of the small-pox, so that there was fear the living would not be sufficient to bury the dead. The whole island was filled with shrieks and lamentations both night and day. They at last began to throw the bodies into the sea, which deprived us of our great support, fish, of which we had ate some kinds that were excellent. I had suppressed my character of physician, fearing I should be detained by reason of the multitude of sick.

On the 15th of October, the Naybe came to Masuah, and dispatched the vessel that brought me over; and, as if he had only waited till this evidence was out of the way, he, that very night, sent me word that I was to prepare him a handsome present. He gave in a long list of particulars to a great amount, which he desired might be divided into three parcels, and presented three several days. One was to be given him as Naybe of Arkecko; one as Omar Aga, representative of the grand signior; and one for having passed our baggage *gratis* and unvisited, especially the large quadrant. For my part, I heartily wished he had seen the whole, as he would not have set great value on the brass and iron.

As Achmet's assurance of protection had given me courage, I answered him, That, having a firman of the grand signior, and letters from Metical Aga, it

was mere generosity in me to give him any present at all, either as Naybe or Omar Aga; and I was not a merchant that bought and sold, nor had merchandise on board, therefore had no customs to pay. Upon this he sent for me to his house, where I found him in a violent fury; and many useless words passed on both sides. At last he peremptorily told me, That unless I had 300 ounces of gold ready to pay him on Monday, upon his landing from Arkeeko, he would confine me in a dungeon, without light, air, or meat, till the bones came through my skin for want.

An uncle of his, then present, greatly aggravated this affair. He pretended that the Naybe might do what he pleased with his presents; but that he could not, in any shape, give away the present due to the janizaries, which was 40 ounces of gold, or 400 dollars; and this was all they contented themselves to take, on account of the letter I brought from the port of janizaries at Cairo; and in this they only taxed me the sum paid by the Abuna for his passage through Masuah. I answered firmly, "Since you have broken your faith with the grand signior, the government of Cairo, the basha at Jidda, and Metical Aga, you will, no doubt, do as you please with me; but you may expect to see the English man of war, the Lion, before Arkeeko, some morning by day-break."—"I should be glad," said the Naybe, "to see that man at Arkeeko, or Masuah, that would carry as much writing from you to Jidda, as would lie upon my thumb-nail; I would strip his shirt off first, and then his skin, and hang him before your door, to teach you more wisdom."—"But my wisdom has taught me to prevent all this. My letter is already gone to Jidda; and if, in twenty days from this, another letter from me does not follow it, you will see what will arrive. In the mean time, I here announce it to you, that I

have letters from Metical Aga and the Sherriffe of Mecca, to Michael Suhul, governor of Tigre, and the king of Abyssinia. I, therefore, would wish that you would leave off these unmanly altercations, which serve no sort of purpose, and let me continue my journey." The Naybe said, in a low voice, to himself, "What, Michael too! Then go your journey, and think of the ill that is before you." I turned my back, without any answer or salutation, and was scarce arrived at home, when a message came from the Naybe, desiring I would sent him two bottles of aquavitæ. I gave the servant two bottles of cinnamon water; which he refused till I had first tasted them: but they were not agreeable to the Naybe, so they were returned.

All this time I very much wondered what was become of Achmet, who, with Mahomet Gibberti, remained at Arkeeko; at last I heard, from the Naybe's servant, that he was in bed, ill of a fever. Mahomet Gibberti had kept his promise to me; and, saying nothing of my skill in physic, or having medicines with me, I sent, however, to the Naybe, to desire leave to go to Arkeeko. He answered me surlily, I might go if I could find a boat; and, indeed, he had taken his measures so well, that not a boat could stir for money or persuasion.

On the 29th of October, the Naybe came again from Arkeeko to Masuah, and, I was told, in very ill-humour with me. I soon received a message to attend him, and found him in a large waste room like a barn, with about sixty people with him. This was his divan, or grand council, with all his janizaries and officers of state, all naked, assembled in parliament. There was a comet that had appeared a few days after our arrival at Masuah which had been many days visible in Arabia Felix, being then in its perihelion;

and, after passing its conjunction with the sun, it now appeared at Masuah early in the evening, receding to its aphelion. I had been observed watching it with great attention; and the large tubes of the telescopes had given offence to ignorant people.

The first question the Naybe asked me was, What that comet meant, and why it appeared? And before I could answer him, he again said, "The first time it was visible, it brought the small-pox, which has killed above 1000 people in Masuah and Arkeeko. It is known you conversed with it every night at Loheia; it has now followed you again, to finish the few that remain, and then you are to carry it into Abyssinia. What have you to do with the comet?"

Without giving me leave to speak, his brother Emir Achmet then said, That he was informed I was an engineer going to Michael, governor of Tigre, to teach the Abyssinians to make cannon and gunpowder; that the first attack was to be against Masuah. Five or six others spoke much in the same strain; and the Naybe concluded by saying, That he would send me in chains to Constantinople, unless I went to Hamazen, with his brother Emir Achmet, to the hot-wells there; and that this was the resolution of all the janizaries; for I had concealed my being a physician.

I had not yet opened my mouth. I then asked, If all these were janizaries? and, Where was their commanding-officer? A well-looking, elderly man, answered, "I am Sardar of the janizaries."—"If you are Sardar, then," said I, "this firman orders you to protect me. The Naybe is a man of this country, no member of the Ottoman empire." Upon my first producing my firman to him, he threw it aside like waste paper. The greatest vizir in the Turkish dominions would have received it standing, bowed his

head to the ground, then kissed it, and put it upon his forehead. A general murmur of approbation followed, and I continued—"Now I must tell you, my resolution is, never to go to Hamazen, or elsewhere, with Emir Achmet. Both he and the Naybe have shewed themselves my enemies; and, I believe, that to send me to Hamazen is to rob and murder me out of sight."—"Dog of a Christian!" says Emir Achmet, putting his hand to his knife, "if the Naybe was to murder you, could he not do it here now this minute?"—"No," says the man, who had called himself Sardar, "he could not; I would not suffer any such thing. Achmet is the stranger's friend, and recommended me to day to see no injury done him; he is ill, or would have been here himself."

"Achmet," said I, "is my friend, and fears God; and were I not hindered by the Naybe from seeing him, his sickness before this would have been removed. I will go to Achmet at Arkeeko, but not to Hamazen, nor ever again to the Naybe here in Masuah. Whatever happens to me must befal me in my own house. Consider what a figure a few naked men will make, the day that my countrymen ask the reason of this either here or in Arabia." I then turned my back, and went out without ceremony. "A brave man!" I heard a voice say behind me, "*Wallan Englese!* True English, by G—d!" I went away exceedingly disturbed, as it was plain my affairs were coming to a crisis for good or for evil. I observed, or thought I observed, all the people shun me. I was, indeed, upon my guard, and did not wish them to come near me; but, turning down into my own gateway, a man passed close by me, saying distinctly in my ear, though in a low voice, first in Tigre, and then in Arabic, "Fear nothing, or, Be not afraid." This hint, short as it was, gave me no small courage.

I had scarcely dined, when a servant came with a letter from Achmet at Arkeeko, telling me how ill he had been, and how sorry he was that I refused to come to see him, as Mahomet Gibberti had told him I could help him. He desired me also to keep the bearer with me in my house, and give him charge of the gate till he could come to Masuah himself.

I soon saw the treachery of the Naybe. He had not, indeed, forbid me to go and see his nephew, but he had forbid any boat to carry me, and this I told the servant, appealing to the Sardar for what I said in the divan, of my willingness to go to Arkeeko to Achmet, though I positively refused to go to Hamazen. I begged the servant to stop for a moment, and go to the Sardar, who was in the castle, as I had been very essentially obliged to him for his interposition at a very critical time, when there was an intention to take away my life. I sent him a small present by Achmet's servant, who delivered the message faithfully, and had heard all that had passed in the divan. He brought me back a pipe from the Sardar in return for my present, with this message, That he had heard of my countrymen, though he had never seen them; that he loved brave men, and could not see them injured; but Achmet being my friend, I had no need of him. That night he departed for Arkeeko, desiring us to shut the door, and leaving us another man, with orders to admit nobody, and advising us to defend ourselves, if any one offered to force entrance, be they who they would, for that nobody had business abroad in the night.

I now began to resume my confidence, seeing that Providence had still kept us under his protection; and it was not long when we had an opportunity to exercise this confidence. About 12 o'clock at night, a man came to the door, and desired to be admitted;

which request was refused without any ceremony. Then came two or three more, in the name of Achmet, who were told by the servant, that they would not be admitted. They then asked to speak with me, and grew very tumultuous, pressing with their backs against the door. When I came to them, a young man among them said he was son to Emir Achmet, and that his father and some friends were coming to drink a glass of aracky (so they call brandy) with me. I told him my resolution was not to admit either Emir Achmet, or any other person, at night; and that I never drank aracky.

They attempted again to force open the door, which was strongly barricaded. But as there were cracks in it, I put the point of a sword through one of them, desiring them to be cautious of hurting themselves upon the iron spikes. Still they attempted to force open the door, when the servant told them, that Achmet, when he left him the charge of that door, had ordered us to fire upon them who offered to force an entrance at night. A voice asked him, Who the devil he was? The servant answered, in a very spirited manner, That he had greater reason to ask who they were, as he took them for thieves, about whose names he did not trouble himself. "However," says he, "mine is Abdelcader (the son of somebody else, whom I do not remember). Now you know who I am, and that I do not fear you; and you, Yagoube, if you do not fire upon them, your blood be upon your own head. The Sardar from the castle will soon be up with the rest." I ordered then a torch to be brought, that they might have a view of us through the cracks of the door; but Abdelcader's threat being fully sufficient, they retired, and we heard no more of them.

It was the 4th of November when the servant of

Achmet returned in a boat from Arkeeko, and with him four janizaries. He was not yet well, and was very desirous to see me. He suspected either that he was poisoned or bewitched, and had tried many charms without good effect. We arrived at Arkeeko about eleven, passed the door of the Naybe without challenge, and found Achmet in his own house, ill of an intermitting fever, under the very worst of regimens.

He was much apprehensive that he should die, or lose the use of his limbs, as Emir Achmet had done: the same woman, a Shiho, and a witch, was, he said, the occasion of both. "If, Achmet, your uncle had lost the use of his tongue," said I, "it would have saved him a great deal of improper discourse in the divan." His head ached violently, and he could only say, "Aye! aye! the old miscreant knew I was ill, or that would not have happened." I gave Achmet proper remedies to ease his pains and his stomach, and the next morning began with bark.

This medicine operates quickly here; nay, even the bark that remains, after the stronger spirtuous tincture is drawn from it, seems to answer the purpose very little worse than did the first. I staid here till the 6th in the morning, at which time he was free from the fever. I left him, however, some doses to prevent its return; and he told me, on the 7th, he would come to Masuah with boats and men, to bring us, with our baggage, to Arkeeko, and free us from the bondage of Masuah.

Upon the 6th, in the morning, while at breakfast, I was told that three servants had arrived from Tigre; one from Jann, a young man and slave, who spoke and wrote Greek perfectly; the other two servants were Ras Michael's, or rather the king's, both wearing the red short cloak lined and turned up with mazarine-blue, which is the badge of the king's ser-

vant, and is called shalaka. Ras Michael's letters to the Naybe were very short. He said the king Hatze Hannes's health was bad, and wondered at hearing that the physician, sent to him by Metical Aga from Arabia, was not forwarded to him instantly at Gondar, as he had heard of his being arrived at Masuah some time before. He ordered the Naybe, moreover, to furnish me with necessaries, and dispatch me without loss of time; although all the letters were the contrivances of Janni, his particular letter to the Naybe was in a milder style. He expressed the great necessity the king had for a physician, and how impatiently he had waited his arrival. He did not say that he had heard any such person was yet arrived at Masuah, only wished he might be forwarded, without delay, as soon as he came.

To us Janni sent a message by a servant, bidding us a hearty welcome, acknowledging the receipt of the patriarch's letter, and advising us, by all means, to come speedily to him; for the times were very unsettled, and might grow worse.

In the afternoon I embarked for Masuah. At the shore I received a message from the Naybe to come and speak to him; but I returned for answer, "It was impossible, as I was obliged to go to Masuah to get medicines for his nephew, Achmet."

CHAP. II.

Directions to Travellers for preserving Health—Diseases of the Country—Music—Trade, &c. of Masuah—Conferences with the Naybe.

We arrived in the island at eight o'clock, to the great joy of our servants, who were afraid of some stratagem of the Naybe. We got every thing in order, without interruption, and completed our observations upon this inhospitable island, infamous for the quantity of Christian blood shed there upon treacherous pretences.

Masuah, by a great variety of observations of the sun and stars, we found to be in lat. 15° 35′ 5″, and, by an observation of the second satellite of Jupiter, on the 22d of September 1769, we found its latitude to be 39° 36′ 30″ east of the meridian of Greenwich: the variation of the needle was observed at mid-day, the 23d of September, to be 12° 48′ west. From this it follows, that Loheia, being nearly opposite (for it is in lat. 15° 40′ 52″), the breadth of the Red Sea between Masuah and Loheia is 4° 10′ 22″. Supposing, then, a degree to be equal to 66 statute miles, this, in round numbers, will bring the breadth to be 276 miles, equal to 92 leagues, or thereabouts.

Again, as the generality of maps have placed the coast of Arabia, where Loheia stands, in the 44°, and

it is the part of the peninsula that runs farthest to the westward, all the west coast of Arabia Felix will fall to be brought farther east about 3° 46′ 0″.

Before packing up our barometer at Loheia, I filled a tube with clean mercury, perfectly purged of outward air; and, on the 30th of August, upon three several trials, the mean of the result of each trial was, at six in the morning, 26° 8′ 8″; two o'clock in the afternoon, 26° 4′ 1″; and, half past six in the evening, 26° 6′ 2″, fair clear weather, with very little wind at west.

At Masuah, the 4th of October, I repeated the same experiment with the same mercury and tube. The means were as follow: At six in the morning 25° 8′ 2″; two o'clock in the afternoon, 25° 3′ 2″; and, at half past six in the evening, 25° 3′ 7″, clear, with a moderate wind at west; so that the barometer fell one inch and one line at Masuah lower than it was at Loheia, though it often rose upon violent storms of wind and rain; and, even where there was no rain, it again fell instantly upon the storm ceasing, and never arrived to the height it stood last at on the coast of Arabia. The greatest height I ever observed Fahrenheit's thermometer in the shade, at Masuah, was on the 22d of October, at two in the afternoon, 93°, wind north-east and by north, cloudy; the lowest was on the 23d, at four in the morning, 82°, wind west. It was, to sense, much hotter than in any part of Arabia Felix; but we found no such tickling or irritation on our legs, as we had done at Loheia, probably because the soil was here less impregnated with salt.

We observed here, for the first time, three remarkable circumstances shewing the increase of heat. I had carried with me several steel plates for making screws of different sizes. The heat had so swelled the pin, or male screw, that it was cut nearly one-

third through by the edge of the female. The sealing-wax, of which we had procured a fresh parcel from the India ships, was fully more fluid, while lying in our boxes, than tar. The third was the colour of the spirit in the thermometer, which was quite discharged, and sticking in masses at unequal heights, while the liquor was clear like spring-water.

Masuah is very unwholesome, as, indeed, is the whole coast of the Red Sea from Suez to Babelmandeb, but more especially between the tropics.—Violent fevers, called there *nedad*, make the principal figure in this fatal list, and generally terminate the third day in death. If the patient survives till the fifth day, he very often recovers by drinking water only, and throwing a quantity of cold water upon him, even in his bed, where he is permitted to lie without attempting to make him dry, or change his bed, till another deluge adds to the first.

There is no remedy so sovereign here as the bark; but it must be given in very different times and manners from those pursued in Europe. Were a physician to take time to prepare his patient for the bark, by first giving him purgatives, he would be dead of the fever before his preparation was completed. Immediately when a nausea, or aversion to eat, frequent fits of yawning, straitness about the eyes, and an unusual, but not painful sensation, along the spine, comes on, no time is then to be lost; small doses of the bark must be frequently repeated, and perfect abstinence observed, unless from copious draughts of cold water.

I never dared to venture, or seldom, upon the deluge of water, but am convinced it is frequently of great use. The second or third dose of the bark, if any quantity is swallowed, never fails to purge; and, if this evacuation is copious, the patient rarely dies, but, on the contrary, his recovery is generally rapid.

Moderate purging, then, is for the most part to be adopted; and rice is a much better food than fruit.

I know that all this is heterodox in Europe, and contrary to the practice, because it is contrary to system. For my own part, I am content to write faithfully what I carefully observed, leaving every body afterwards to follow their own way at their peril.

Bark, I have been told by Spaniards, who have been in South America, purges always when taken in their fevers. A different climate, different regimen, and different habit of body, or exercise, may surely so far alter the operation of a drug as to make it have a different effect in Africa from what it has in Europe. Be this as it may, still I say bark is a purgative when it is successful in this fever; but bleeding, at no stage of this distemper, is of any service; and, indeed, if attempted the second day, the lancet is seldom followed by blood. Ipecacuanha both fatigues the patient and heightens the fever, and so conducts the patient more speedily to his end. Black spots are frequently found on the breast and belly of the dead person. The belly swells, and the stench becomes insufferable in three hours after death, if the person dies in the day, or if the weather is warm.

The next common disease in the low country of Arabia, the intermediate island of Masuah, and all Abyssinia (for the diseases are exactly similar in all this tract) is the Tertian fever, which is in nothing different from our Tertian, and is successfully treated here in the same manner as in Europe. As no species of this disease (at least that I have seen) menaces the patient with death, especially in the beginning of the disorder, some time may be allowed for preparation to those who doubt the effect of the bark in the country. But still I apprehend the safest way is to give small doses from the beginning, on the first in-

termission, or even remission, though this should be somewhat obscure and uncertain. To speak plainly; when the stomach nauseates, the head aches, yawning becomes frequent, and not an excessive pain in the nape of the neck, when a shivering which goes quickly off, a coldness down the spine, a more than ordinary cowardliness and inactivity prevails (the heat of the climate gives one always enough of these last sensations); I say, when any number of these symptoms unite, have recourse to the powder of bark infused in water; shut your mouth against every sort of food; and, at the crisis, your disease will immediately decide its name among the class of fevers.

All fevers end in intermittents; and if these intermittents continue long, and the first evacuations by the bark have not been copious and constant, these fevers generally end in dysenteries, which are always tedious, and very frequently prove mortal. Bark in small quantities, ipecacuanha, too, in very small quantities, so as not to vomit, water, and fruit not over ripe, have been found the most successful remedies.

As for the other species of dysentery, which begins with a constant diarrhœa, when the guts at last are excoriated, and the mucus voided by the stools, this disease is rarely cured if it begins with the rainy season. But if, on the contrary, it happen either in the sunny six months, or the end of the rainy ones immediately next to them, small doses of ipecacuanha either carry it off, or it changes into an intermitting fever, which yields afterwards to the bark. And it always has seemed to me, that there is a great affinity between the fevers and dysenteries in these countries, the one ending in the other almost perpetually.

The next disease, which we may say is endemial in the countries before mentioned, is called *hanzeer*, the *hogs*, or the *swine*, and is a swelling of the glands of the throat, and under the arms. This the ignorant

inhabitants endeavour to bring to a suppuration; but in vain: they then open them in several places; a sore and running follows, and a disease very much resembling what is called in Europe the evil.

The next (though not a dangerous complaint) has a very terrible appearance. Small tubercules, or swellings, appear all over the body, but thickest in the thighs, arms, and legs. These swellings go and come for weeks together without pain; though the legs often swell to a monstrous size, as in the dropsy. Sometimes the patients have ulcers in their noses and mouths, not unlike those which are one of the malignant consequences of the venereal disease. The small swellings or eruptions, when squeezed, very often yield blood; in other respects, the patient is generally in good health, saving the pain the ulcers give him, and the still greater uneasiness of mind which he suffers from the spoiling of the smoothness of his skin; for all the nations in Africa within the tropics are wonderfully affected at the smallest eruption or roughness of the skin. A black of Sennaar will hide himself in the house where dark, and is not to be seen by his friends, if he should have two or three pimples on any part of his body. Nor is there any remedy, however violent, that they will not fly to for immediate relief. Scars and wounds are no blemishes; and I have seen them, for three or four pimples on their bracelet arm, suffer the application of a red-hot iron with great resolution and constancy.

These two last diseases yielded, the first slowly, and sometimes imperfectly, to mercurials; and sublimate has by no means, in these climates, the quick and decisive effects it has in Europe. The second is completely and speedily cured by antimonials.

The next complaint I shall mention, as common in these countries, is called Farenteit, a corruption of an Arabic word, which signifies the worm of Pharaoh;

all bad things being by the Arabs attributed to these poor kings, who seem to be looked upon by posterity as the evil genii of the country which they once governed *.

This extraordinary animal only afflicts those who are in constant habit of drinking stagnant water, whether that water is drawn out from wells, as in the kingdom of Sennaar, or found by digging in the sand, where it is making its way to its proper level the sea, after falling down the side of the mountains after the tropical rains. This plague appears indiscriminately in every part of the body, but oftenest in the legs and arms. I never saw it in the face or head; but, far from affecting the fleshy part of the body, it generally comes out where the bone has least flesh upon it.

Upon looking at this worm, on its first appearance, a small black head is extremely visible, with a hooked beak of a whitish colour. Its body is seemingly of a white silky texture, very like a small tendon, bared and perfectly cleaned. After its appearance, the natives of these countries, who are used to it, seize it gently by the head, and wrap it round a thin piece of silk, or small bird's feather. Every day, or several times a-day, they try to wind it up upon the quill as far as it comes readily; and, upon the smallest resistance, they give over for fear of breaking it. I have seen five feet, or something more, of this extraordinary animal, winded out, with invincible patience, in the course of three weeks. No inflammation then remained, and scarcely any redness round the edge of the aperture, only a small quantity of lymph appeared in the hole or puncture, which scarcely issued out upon pressing. In three days it was commonly well, and left no scar or dimple implying loss of substance.

* A superstitious opinion derived from the Jews.—E.

I myself experienced this complaint. I was reading upon a sofa at Cairo, a few days after my return from Upper Egyt, when I felt in the fore part of my leg, upon the bone, about seven inches below the centre of my knee-pan, an itching, resembling what follows the bite of a muscheto. Upon scratching, a small tumour appeared, very like a muscheto bite. The itching returned in about an hour afterwards; and, being more intent upon my reading than my leg, I scratched it till the blood came. I soon after observed something like a black spot, which had already risen considerably above the surface of the skin. All medicine proved useless; and the disease, not being known at Cairo, there was nothing for it but to have recourse to the only received manner of treating it in this country. About three inches of the worm was winded out upon a piece of raw silk in the first week, without pain or fever: but it was broken afterwards, through the carelessness and rashness of the surgeon, when changing a poultice on board the ship in which I returned to France. A violent inflammation followed; the leg swelled so as scarce to leave appearance of knee or ancle; the skin, red and distended, seemed glazed like a mirror. The wound was now healed, and discharged nothing; and there was every appearance of mortification coming on. The great care and attention procured me in the lazaretto at Marseilles, by a nation always foremost in the acts of humanity to strangers, and the attention and skill of the surgeon, recovered me from this troublesome complaint.

Fifty-two days had elapsed since it first began; thirty-five of which were spent in the greatest agony. It suppurated at last; and, by enlarging the orifice, a good quantity of matter was discharged. I had made constant use of bark, both in fomentation and inwardly; but I did not recover the strength of my leg en-

tirely till near a year after, by using the baths of Poretta, the property of my friend Count Ranuzzi, in the mountains above Bologna; which I recommend, for their efficacy, to all those who have wounds, as I do to him to have better accommodation, greater abundance of, and less imposition in, the necessaries of life, than when I was there. It is but a few hours journey over the mountains to Pistoia.

The last I shall mention of these endemial diseases, and the most terrible of all others that can fall to the lot of man, is the Elephantiasis, which some have chosen to call the Leprosy, or Lepra Arabum; though in its appearance, and in all its circumstances and stages, it no more resembles the leprosy of Palestine (which is, I apprehend, the only leprosy that we know), than it does the gout or the dropsy. I never saw the beginning of this disease. During the course of it, the face is often healthy to appearance; the eyes vivid and sparkling: those affected have sometimes a kind of dryness upon the skin of their backs, where, upon scratching, I have seen a mealiness, or whiteness; the only circumstance, to the best of my recollection, in which it resembled the leprosy; but it has no scaliness. The hair, too, is of its natural colour; not white, yellowish, or thin, as in the leprosy, but so far from it, that though the Abyssinians have very rarely hair upon their chin, I have seen people, apparently in the last stage of the elephantiasis, with a very good beard of its natural colour.

The appetite is generally good during this disease, nor does any change of regimen affect the complaint. The pulse is only subject to the same variations as in those who have no declared nor predominant illness; they have a constant thirst, as the lymph, which continually oozes from their wounds, probably demands to be replaced. It is averred by the Abyssinians, that

it is not infectious. I have seen the wives of those who were in a very inveterate stage of this illness, who had borne them several children, who were yet perfectly free and sound from any contagion. Nay, I do not remember to have seen children visibly infected with this disease at all, though, I must own, none of them had the appearance of health. It is said this disease, though surely born with the infant, does not become visible till the approach to manhood, and sometimes it is said to pass by a whole generation.

The chief seat of this disease is from the bending of the knee downwards to the ancle; the leg is swelled to a great degree, becoming one size from bottom to top, and gathered into circular wrinkles, like small hoops or plaits; between every one of which there is an opening that separates it all around from the one above, and which is all raw flesh, or perfectly excoriated. From between these circular divisions a great quantity of lymph constantly oozes. The swelling of the leg reaches over the foot, so as to leave about an inch or little more of it seen. It should seem that the black colour of the skin, the thickness of the leg, and its shapeless form, and the rough tubercules, or excrescences, very like those seen upon the elephant, give the name to this disease, and form a striking resemblance between the distempered legs of this unfortunate individual of the human species, and those of the noble quadruped, the elephant, when in full vigour.

An infirmity, to which the Abyssians are subject, of much worse consequence to the community than the elephantiasis, I mean lying, makes it impossible to form, from their relations, any accurate account of symptoms that might lead the learned to discover the

causes of this extraordinary distemper, and thence suggest some rational method to cure, or diminish it.

It was not from the ignorance of language, nor from want of opportunity, and less from want of pains, that I am not able to give a more distinct account of this dreadful disorder. I kept one of those infected in a house adjoining to mine, in my way to the palace, for near two years; and, during that time, I tried every sort of regimen that I could devise. My friend, Dr Russel, physician at Aleppo (now in the East Indies, to whose care and skill I was indebted for my life in a dangerous fever which I had in Syria, and whose friendship I must always consider as one of the greatest acquisitions I ever made in travelling), desired me, among other medical inquiries, to try the effect of the cicuta upon this disease; and a considerable quantity, made according to the direction of Dr Storke, physician in Vienna, was sent me from Paris, with instructions how to use it.

Having first explained the whole matter, both to the king, Ras Michael, and Azage Tecla Haimanout, chief justice of the king's bench in Abyssinia, and told them of the consequences of giving too great a dose, I obtained their joint permissions to go on without fear, and do what I thought requisite. It is my opinion, says the Azage, that no harm that may accidentally befal one miserable individual, now already cut off from society, should hinder the trial (the only one we ever shall have an opportunity of making) of a medicine, which may save multitudes hereafter from a disease so much worse than death.

It was soon seen, by the constant administration of many ordinary doses, that nothing was to be expected from violent or dangerous ones; as not the smallest degree of amendment ever appeared, either outwardly or inwardly, to the sensation of the patient. Mercury

had no better effect. Tar-water was also tried; and if there was any thing that produced any seeming advantage, it was whey made of cow's milk, of which he was excessively fond, and which the king ordered him to be furnished with, at my desire, in any quantity he pleased, during the experiment.

The troubles of the times prevented further attention. Dr Storke's cicuta, in several instances, made a perfect cure of the hanzeers improperly opened, though, in several other cases, without any apparent cause, it totally miscarried. I scarce ever observed mercury succeed in any complaint.

It is not for me to attempt to explain what are the causes of these distempers. Those whose studies lead them to such investigations, will do well to attach themselves, for first principles, to the difference of climate, and the abuses that obtain under them; after this, to particular circumstances in the necessaries of life, to which nature has subjected the people of these countries. Under the first, we may rank a season of six months rains, succeeded, without interval, by a cloudless sky and vertical sun; and cold nights, which as immediately follow these scorching days. The earth, notwithstanding the heat of these days, is yet perpetually cold, so as to feel disagreeably to the soles of the feet; partly owing to the six months rains, when no sun appears, and partly to the perpetual equality of nights and days; the thinness of the clothing in the better sort (a muslin shirt), while the others are naked, and sleep in this manner exposed, without covering in the cold nights, after the violent perspiration during the sultry day. These may be reckoned imprudences, while the constant use of stagnant putrid water for four months of the year, and the quantity of salt with which the soil of those countries is impregnated, may

be circumstances less conducive to health; to which, however, they have been for ever subject by nature.

It will be very reasonably expected, that, after this unfavourable account of the climate, and the uncertainty of remedies for these frequent and terrible diseases, I should say something of the regimen proper to be observed there, in order to prevent what it seems so doubtful whether we can ever cure.

My first general advice to a stranger is this, to remember well what was the state of his constitution before he visited these countries, and what his complaints were, if he had any; for fear very frequently seizes us upon the first sight of the many and sudden deaths we see upon our first arrival, and our spirits are so lowered by perpetual perspiration, and our nerves so relaxed, that we are apt to mistake the ordinary symptoms of a disease, familiar to us in our own country, for the approach of one of these terrible distempers that are to hurry us in a few hours into eternity. This has a bad effect in the very slightest disorders; so that it has become proverbial—If you think you shall die, you shall die.

If a traveller finds, that he is as well after having been some time in this country, as he was before entering it, his best way is to make no innovation in his regimen, further than in abating something in the quantity. But if he is of a tender constitution, he cannot act more wisely than to follow implicitly the regimen of sober healthy people of the country, without arguing upon European notions, or substituting what we consider as succedaneums to what we see used on the spot. All spirits are to be avoided; even bark is better in water than in wine. The stomach, being relaxed by profuse perspiration, needs something to strengthen, but not inflame, and enable it to perform digestion. For this reason (instinct, we

should call it, if speaking of beasts), the natives of all eastern countries season all species of food, even the simplest and mildest, rice, so much with spices, especially pepper, as absolutely to blister a European palate.

These powerful antiseptics providence has planted in these countries for this use; and the natives have, from the earliest times, had recourse to them, in proportion to the quantity that they can procure. And hence, in these dangerous climates, the natives are as healthy as we are in our northern ones. Travellers in Arabia are disgusted at this seemingly inflammatory food; and nothing is more common than to hear them say, that they are afraid these quantities of spices will give them a fever. But did they ever feel themselves heated by ever so great a quantity of black pepper? Spirits, they think, substituted to this, answer the same purpose. But does not the heat of your skin, the violent pain in your head, while the spirits are filtering through the vessels of your brain, shew the difference? and when did any ever feel a like sensation from black pepper, or any pepper eaten to excess in every meal?

I lay down, then, as a positive rule of health, that the warmest dishes the natives delight in, are the most wholesome strangers can use in the putrid climates of the Lower Arabia, Abyssinia, Sennaar, and Egypt itself; and that spirits, and all fermented liquors, should be regarded as poisons, and, for fear of temptation, not so much as be carried along with you, unless as a menstruum for outward applications.

Spring, or running water, if you can find it, is to be your only drink. You cannot be too nice in procuring this article. But as, on both coasts of the Red Sea, you scarcely find any but stagnant water, the way I practised was always this, when I was at

any place that allowed me time and opportunity—I took a quantity of fine sand, washed it from the salt quality with which it was impregnated, and spread it upon a sheet to dry; I then filled an oil-jar with water, and poured into it as much from a boiling kettle as would serve to kill all the animalcula and eggs that were in it. I then sifted my dried sand, as slowly as possible, upon the surface of the water in the jar, till the sand stood half a foot in the bottom of it; after letting it settle a night, we drew it off by a hole in the jar, with a spigot in it, about an inch above the sand; then threw the remaining sand out upon the cloth, and dried and washed it again.

This process is sooner performed than described. The water is as limpid as the purest spring, and little inferior to the finest Spa. Drink largely of this without fear, according as your appetite requires. By violent perspiration the aqueous part of your blood is thrown off; and it is not spirituous liquor can restore this, whatever momentary strength it may give you from another cause. When hot, and almost fainting with weakness from continual perspiration, I have gone into a warm bath, and been immediately restored to strength, as upon first rising in the morning. Some perhaps will object, that this heat should have weakened and overpowered you; but the fact is otherwise; and the reason is, the quantity of water, taken up by your absorbing vessels, restored to your blood that finner fluid which was thrown off, and then the uneasiness occasioned by that want ceased, for it was the want of that we called uneasiness.

In Nubia never scruple to throw yourself into the coldest river or spring you can find, in whatever degree of heat you are. The reason of the difference in Europe is, that when by violence you have raised yourself to an extraordinary degree of heat, the cold

water in which you plunge yourself checks your perspiration, and shuts your pores suddenly. The medium is itself too cold, and you do not use force sufficient to bring back the perspiration, which nought but action occasioned; whereas, in these warm countries, your perspiration is natural and constant, though no action be used, only from the temperature of the medium; therefore, though your pores are shut, the moment you plunge yourself in the cold water, the simple condition of the outward air again covers you with pearls of sweat the moment you emerge; and you begin the expence of the aqueous part of your blood afresh, from the new stock that you have laid in by your immersion.

For this reason, if you are well, deluge yourself from head to foot, even in the house, where water is plenty, by directing a servant to throw buckets upon you at least once a-day when you are hottest; not from any imagination that the water braces you, as it is called, for your bracing will last you only a very few minutes; but these copious inundations will carry watery particles into your blood, though not equal to bathing in running streams, where the total immersion, the motion of the water, and the action of the limbs, all conspire to the benefit you are in quest of. As to cold water bracing in these climates, I am persuaded it is an idea not founded in truth. By observation it has appeared often to me, that, when heated by violent exercise, I have been much more relieved, and my strength more completely restored, by the use of a tepid bath, than by an equal time passed in a cold one.

Do not fatigue yourself if possible. Exercise is neither so necessary or salutary here as in Europe. Use fruits sparingly, especially if too ripe. The musa, or banana, in Arabia Felix, are always rotten-ripe when

they are brought to you. Avoid all sort of fruit exposed for sale in the markets, as it has probably been gathered in the sun, and carried miles in it, and all its juices are in a state of fermentation. Lay it first upon a table covered with a coarse cloth, and throw frequently a quantity of water upon it; and, if you have an opportunity, gather it in the dew of the morning before dawn of day; for that is far better.

Rice and pillaw are the best food; fowls are very bad, eggs are worse; greens are not wholesome. In Arabia the mutton is good, and, when roasted, may be eaten warm with safety; perhaps better if cold. All soups or broths are to be avoided; all game is bad.

I have known many very scrupulous about eating suppers, but, I am persuaded without reason. The great perspiration which relaxes the stomach so much through the day, has now ceased, and the breathing of cooler air has given to its operations a much stronger tone. I always made it my most liberal meal, if I ate meat at all. While at Jidda, my supper was a piece of cold roasted mutton, and a large glass of water, with my good friend Captain Thornhill, during the dog-days.

After this, the excessive heat of the day being past, covering our heads from the night air, always blowing at that time from the east, and charged with watery particles from the Indian Ocean, we had a luxurious walk of two or three hours, as free from the heat as from the noise and impertinence of the day, upon a terraced roof, under a cloudless sky, where the smallest star is visible. These evening walks have been looked upon as one of the principal pleasures of the east, even though not accompanied with the luxuries of astronomy and meditation. They have been adhered to from early times to the present, and we may therefore be assured they were always whole-

some; they have often been misapplied, and mispent in love.

It is a custom that, from the first ages, has prevailed in the east, to shriek and lament upon the death of a friend or relation, and cut their faces upon the temple with their nails, about the breadth of a sixpence, one of which is left long for that purpose. It was always practised by the Jews, and thence adopted by the Abyssinians, though expressly forbidden both by the law and by the prophets*. At Masuah, it seems to be particular to dance upon that occasion. The women, friends, and visitors place themselves in a ring; then dance slowly figuring in and out, as in a country-dance. This dance is all to the voice, no instrument being used upon the occasion; only the drum (the butter-jar before mentioned) is beat adroitly enough, and seems at once necessary to keep the dance and song in order. In Abyssinia, too, this is pursued in a manner more ridiculous. Upon the death of an ozoro, or any nobleman, the twelve judges (who are generally between 60 and 70 years of age) sing the song, and dance the figure-dance, in a manner so truly ridiculous, that grief must have taken fast hold of every spectator, who does not laugh upon the occasion. There needs no other proof the deceased was a friend.

Mahomet Gibberti married at Arkeeko. For fifteen days afterward, the husband there is invisible to every body but the female friends of his wife, who in that sultry country do every thing they can, by hot and spiced drinks, to throw the man, stewed in a close room, into a fever. I do believe that Mahomet Gibberti, in the course of these fifteen days, was at least

* Levit. chap. xix. ver. 28. Jerem. chap. xvi. ver. 6.

two stone lighter. It puts me much in mind of some of our countrymen sweating themselves for a horse race with a load of flannel on. I conceive that Mahomet Gibberti, had it not been for the spice, would have made a bad figure in the match he was engaged in. One of these nights of his being sequestered, when, had I not providentially engaged Achmet, his uncle the Naybe would have cut our throats, I heard two girls, professors hired for such occasions, sing alternately verse for verse in reply to each other, in the most agreeable and melodious manner I ever heard in my life. This gave me great hopes that, in Abyssinia, I should find music in a state of perfection little expected in Europe. Upon inquiry into particulars, I was miserably disappointed, by being told these musicians were all strangers from Azah, the myrrh country, where all the people were natural musicians, and sung in a better stile than that I had heard; but that nothing of this kind was known in Abyssinia, a mountainous, barbarous country, without instrument, and without song; and that it was the same here in Atbara; a miserable truth, which I afterwards completely verified. These singers were Cushites, not Shepherds.

I, however, made myself master of two or three of these alternate songs upon the guitar, the wretched instrument of that country; and was surprised to find the words in a language equally strange to Masuah and Abyssinia. I had frequent interviews with these musicians in the evening; they were perfectly black and woolly headed. Being slaves, they spoke both Arabic and Tigre, but could sing in neither; and, from every possible inquiry, I found every thing allied to counterpoint was unknown among them. I have sometimes endeavoured to recover fragments of these songs, which I once perfectly knew from memory only; but unfortunately I committed none of them to

writing. Sorrow, and various misfortunes, that every day marked my stay in the barbarous country to which I was then going, and the necessary part I, much against my will, was for self-preservation forced to take in the ruder occupations of those times, have, to my very great regret, obliterated long ago the whole from my memory.

It is a general custom in Masuah for people to burn myrrh and incense in their houses before they open the doors in the morning; and when they go out at night, or early in the day, they have always a small piece of rag highly fumigated with these two perfumes, which they stuff into each nostril to keep them from the unwholesome air.

The houses of Masuah are, in general, built of poles and bent grass, as in the towns of Arabia; but, besides these, there are about twenty of stone, six or eight of which are two storeys each; though the second seldom consists of more than one room, and that one generally not a large one. The stones are drawn out of the sea, as at Dahalac: and in these we see the beds of that curious mussel, or shell-fish, found to be contained in the solid rock at Mahon, called *dattoli da mare*, or sea-dates, the fish of which I never saw in the Red Sea; though there is no doubt but they are to be found in the rocky islands about Masuah, if they break the rocks for them.

Although Masuah is situated in the very entrance of Abyssinia, a very plentiful country, yet all the necessaries of life are scarce and dear. Their quality, too, is very indifferent. This is owing to the difficulty, expence, and danger of carrying the several articles through the desert flat country, called Samhar, which lies between Arkeeko and the mountains of Abyssinia; as well as to the extortions exercised by the Naybe, who takes, under the name of customs, what-

ever part he pleases of the goods and provisions brought to that island; by which means the profit of the seller is so small, as not to be worth the pains and risk of bringing it; 20 rotol of butter cost a pataka and a half, 3½ harf; or, in one term, 45½ harf. A goat is half of a pataka; a sheep, two-thirds of a pataka; the ardep of wheat, 4 patakas; Dora, from Arabia, 2 patakas.

—— Venit, vilissima rerum
Hic aqua.——Horat. lib. 1. Sat. 6. v. 8.

Water is sold for three diwans, or paras, the seven gallons. The same sort of money is in use at Masuah, and the opposite coast of Arabia; and it is indeed owing to the commercial intercourse with that coast that any coin is current in this or the western side. It is all valued by the Venetian sequin. But glass-beads, called contaria, of all kinds and colours, perfect and broken, pass for small money, and are called, in their language, Borjooke.

Table of the relative value of money.

Venetian Sequin,	-	2½ Pataka.
Pataka or Imperial Dollar,		28 Harf.
1 Harf,	- - -	4 Diwani.
10 Kibeer,	- -	1 Diwani.
1 Kibeer,	- -	3 Borjooke, or Grains.

The Harf is likewise called Dahab, a word very equivocal, as it means, in Arabic, gold, and frequently a sequin. The Harf is 120 grains of beads.

The zermabub, or sequin of Constantinople, is not current here. Those that have them, can only dispose of them to the women, who hang them about their temples, to their necklaces, and round the necks

of their children. The fraction of the pataka is the half and quarter, which pass here likewise.

There is a considerable deal of trade carried on at Masuah, notwithstanding these inconveniences, narrow and confined as the island is, and violent and unjust as is the government. But it is all done in a slovenly manner, and for articles where a small capital is invested. Property here is too precarious to risk a venture in valuable commodities, where the hand of power enters into every transaction.

The goods imported from the Arabian side are blue cotton, Surat cloths, and cochineal ditto, called Kermis; fine cloths from different markets in India; coarse white cotton cloths from Yemen; cotton unspun from ditto in bales; Venetian beads, crystal, drinking, and looking glasses; and cohol, or crude antimony. These three last articles come in great quantities from Cairo, first in the coffee ships to Jidda, and then in small barks over to this port. Old copper too is an article on which much is gained, and a great quantity is imported.

The Galla, and all the various tribes to the westward of Gondar, wear bracelets of this copper; and they say at times, that, near the country of the Gongas and Guba, it has been sold, weight for weight, with gold. There is a shell likewise here, a univalve of the species of volutes, which sells at a cuba for ten paras. It is brought from near Hodeida, though it is sometimes found at Konfodah and Loheia. There are a few also at Dahalac, but not esteemed: these pass for money among the Djawi and other western Galla.

The cuba is a wooden measure, containing, very exactly, 62 cubic inches of rain water. The drachm is called Cafla; there are 10 drachms in their wakea.

Gold, 16 patakas *per* wakea.
Civet, 1¾ pataka the wakea.
Elephants teeth, 18 patakas for 35 rotol.
Wax, 4 patakas the franzala.
Myrrh, 3 patakas *per* ditto.
Coffee, 1 pataka the 6 rotol.
Honey, ¼ of a pataka the cuba.

The Banians were once the principal merchants of Masuah; but the number is now reduced to six. They are silver-smiths, that make ear rings and other ornaments for the women on the continent, and are assayers of gold; they make, however, but a poor livelihood.

As there is no water in Masuah, the number of animals belonging to it can be but small. The sea-fowl have nothing singular in them, and they are the grey and the white gull, and the small bird, called the sea-lark, or pickerel. The sky-lark is here, but is mute the whole year, till the first rains fall in November; he then mounts very high, and sings in the very heat of the day. I saw him in the Tehama, but he did not sing there; probably for the reason given above, as there was no rain.

There are no sparrows to be seen here, or on the opposite shore, nor in the islands. Although there were scorpions in abundance at Loheia, we found none of them at Masuah. Water and greens, especially of the melon and cucumber kind, seem to be necessary to this poisonous insect. Indeed it was only after rains we saw them in Loheia, and then the young ones appeared in swarms; this was in the end of August. They are of a dull green colour, bordering upon yellow. As far as I could observe, no person apprehended any thing from their sting beyond a few minutes pain.

* We left Masuah the 10th of November, with the soldiers and boats belonging to Achmet. We had likewise three servants from Abyssinia, and no longer apprehended the Naybe, who seemed, on his part, to think no more of us.

In the bay between Masuah and Arkeeko are two islands, Toulahout and Shekh Seide; the first on the west, the other on the south. They are both uninhabited, and without water. Shekh Seide has a marabout or saint's tomb, on the west end. It is not half a mile in length, when not overflowed, but has two large points of sand which run far out to the east and to the west. Its west point runs so near to Toulahout, as, at low-water, scarce to leave a channel for the breadth of a boat to pass between.

There is a chart, or map of the island of Masuah, handed about with other bad maps and charts of the Red Sea, (of which I have already spoken) among our English captains from India. It seems to be of as old date as the first landing of the Portuguese under Don Roderigo de Lima, in the time of David III. but it is very inaccurate, or rather erroneous throughout. The map of the island, harbour and bay, with the soundings, which I here have given, may be depened upon, as being done on the spot with the greatest attention.

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* Friday, November 10th, 1770. From this place begins the Italian Journal by Balugani, which records minutely every topographical circumstance, such as the names of the mountains, rivers; bearings of places by compass; the encampments; hours of the day in which they travelled, &c. till they came to Gondar.

Mr Bruce's pocket book gives a separate correspondent narrative along with his own observations, nearly in the words of these pages.—E.

Achmet, though much better, was, however, not well. His fever had left him, but he had some symptoms of its being followed by a dysentery. In the two days I rested at his house, I had endeavoured to remove these complaints, and had succeeded in part; for which he testified the utmost gratitude, as he was wonderfully afraid to die.

The Naybe had visited him several times every day; but as I was desirous to see Achmet well before I left Arkeeko, I kept out of the way on these occasions, being resolved, the first interview, to press for an immediate departure.

On the 13th, at four o'clock in the afternoon, I waited upon the Naybe at his own house. He received me with more civility than usual, or rather, I should have said, with less brutality; for a grain of any thing like civility had never yet appeared in his behaviour. He had just received news, that a servant of his, sent to collect money at Hamazen, had run off with it. As I saw he was busy, I took my leave of him, only asking his commands for Habbesh; to which he answered, "We have time enough to think of that; do you come here to-morrow."

On the 14th, in the morning, I waited upon him according to appointment, having first struck my tent and got all my baggage in readiness. He received me as before, then told me with a grave air, "That he was willing to further my journey into Habbesh to the utmost of his power, provided I shewed him that consideration which was due to him from all passengers; that as, by my tent, baggage, and arms, he saw I was a man above the common sort, which the grand signior's firman, and all my letters testified, less than 1000 patakas offered by me would be putting a great affront upon him; however, in consideration of the governor of Tigre, to whom I was going, he would

consent to receive 300, upon my swearing not to divulge this, for fear of the shame that would fall upon him abroad."

To this I answered in the same grave tone, "That I thought him very wrong to take 300 patakas with shame, when receiving a thousand would be more honourable as well as more profitable; therefore he had nothing to do but put that into his account-book with the governor of Tigre, and settle his honour and his interest together. As for myself, I was sent for by Metical Aga, on account of the king, and was proceeding accordingly, and if he opposed my going forward, to Metical Aga I should return; but then, again, I should expect ten thousand patakas from Metical Aga, for the trouble and loss of time I had been at, which he and the Ras would no doubt settle with him." The Naybe said nothing in reply, but only muttered, closing his teeth, *shcitan afrit!* that devil, or tormenting spirit!

"Look you, (says one of the king's servants, whom I had not heard speak before) I was ordered to bring this man to my master; I heard no talk of patakas; the army is ready to march against Waragna Fasil; I must not lose my time here." Then taking his short red cloak under his arm, and giving it a shake to make the dust fly from it, he put it upon his shoulders, and, stretching out his hand very familiarly, said, "Naybe, within this hour I am for Habbesh, my companion will stay here with the man; give me my dues for coming here, and I shall carry any answer either of you has to send." The Naybe looked much disconcerted. "Besides, said I, you owe me 300 patakas for saving the life of your nephew Achmet. Is not his life worth 300 patakas?" He looked very silly, and said, "Achmet's life is worth all Masuah." There was no more talk of patakas after this,

He ordered the king's servant not to go that day, but come to him to-morrow to receive his letters, and he would expedite us for Habbesh.

Those friends that I had made at Arkeeko and Masuah, seeing the Naybe's obstinacy against our departure, and knowing the cruelty of his nature, advised me to abandon all thoughts of Abyssinia; for that, in passing through Samhar, among the many barbarous people whom he commanded, difficulties would multiply upon us daily, and, either by accident, or order of the Naybe, we should surely be cut off.

I was too well convinced of the embarrassment that lay behind me if left alone with the Naybe, and too determined upon my journey to hesitate upon going forward. I even flattered myself, that his stock of stratagems to prevent our going was by this time exhausted, and that the morrow would see us in the open fields, free from further tyranny and controul. In this conjecture I was waranted by the visible impression the declaration of the king's servant had made upon him.

On the 15th, early in the morning, I struck my tent again, and had my baggage prepared, to shew we were determined to stay no longer. At eight o'clock I went to the Naybe, and found him almost alone, when he received me in a manner that, for him, might have passed for civil. He began with a considerable degree of eloquence, or fluency of speech, a long enumeration of the difficulties of our journey, the rivers, precipices, mountains, and woods, we were to pass; the number of wild beasts everywhere to be found; as also the wild savage people that inhabited those places; the most of which, he said, were luckily under his command, and he would recommend to them to do us all manner of good offices. He commanded two of his secretaries to write the proper letters, and,

in the mean time, ordered us coffee; conversing naturally enough about the king and Ras Michael, their campaign against Fasil, and the great improbability there was they should be successful.

At this time came in a servant, covered with dust and seemingly fatigued, as having arrived in haste from afar. The Naybe, with a considerable deal of uneasiness and confusion, opened the letters; which were said to bring intelligence, that the Hazorta, Shiho, and Tora, the three nations who possessed that part of Samhar through which our road led to Dabarwa, the common passage from Masuah to Tigre, had revolted, driven away his servants, and declared themselves independent. He then (as if all was over) ordered his secretaries to stop writing; and, lifting up his eyes, began, with great seeming devotion, to thank God we were not already on our journey; for, innocent as he was, when we should have been cut off, the fault would have been imputed to him.

Angry as I was at so bare-faced a farce, I could not help bursting out into a violent fit of loud laughter; when he put on the severest countenance, and desired to know the reason of my laughing at such a time. "It is now two months," answered I, "since you have been throwing various objections in my way; Can you wonder that I do not give into so gross an imposition? This same morning, before I struck my tent, in presence of your nephew Achmet, I spoke with two Shiho just arrived from Samhar, who brought letters to Achmet, which said all was in peace. Have your earlier intelligence than that of this morning?"

He was for some time without speaking; then said, "If you are weary of living, you are welcome to go; but I will do my duty, in warning those that are along with you, of their and your danger, that when the mischief happens, it may not be imputed to me."

"No number of naked Shiho," said I, "unless instructed by you, can ever be found in our road that will venture to attack us. The Shiho have no fire-arms: but if you have sent on purpose some of your soldiers that have fire-arms, these will discover by what authority they come. For our part, we cannot fly; we neither know the country, the language, nor the watering-places; and we shall not attempt it. We have plenty of different sorts of fire-arms, and your servants have often seen, at Masuah, we are not ignorant in the use of them. We, it is true, may lose our lives; that is in the hand of the Almighty; but we shall not fail to leave enough on the spot, to give sufficient indication to the king and Ras Michael, who it was that were our assassins; Janni of Adowa will explain the rest."

I then rose very abruptly to go away. It is impossible to give one, not conversant with these people, any conception what perfect masters the most clownish and beastly among them are of dissimulation. The countenance of the Naybe now changed in a moment. In his turn he burst out into a loud fit of laughter, which surprised me full as much as mine, some time before, had done him. Every feature of his treacherous countenance was altered and softened into complacency; and he, for the first time, bore the appearance of a man.

"What I mentioned about the Shiho," he then said, "was but to try you; all is peace. I only wanted to keep you here, if possible, to cure my nephew Achmet, and his uncle Emir Mahomet; but since you are resolved to go, be not afraid; the roads are safe enough. I will give you a person to conduct you, that will carry you in safety, even if there was danger; only go and prepare such remedies as may be proper for the Emir, and leave them with my nephew

Achmet, while I finish my letters." This I willingly consented to do; and at my return I found every thing ready.

Our guide was a handsome young man, to whom, though a Christian, the Naybe had married his sister; his name was Saloome. The common price paid for such a conductor is three pieces of blue Surat cotton cloth. The Naybe, however, obliged us to promise thirteen to his brother-in-law, with which, to get rid of him with some degree of good grace, we willingly complied.

Before our setting out I told this to Achmet, who said, that the man was not a bad one naturally, but that his uncle the Naybe made all men wicked as himself. He furnished me with a man to shew me where I should pitch my tent; and told me he should now take my final deliverance upon himself; for we were yet far, according to the Naybe's intentions, from beginning our journey to Gondar.

Arkeeko consists of about 400 houses; a few of which are built of clay, the rest of coarse grass like reeds. The Naybe's house is of these last-named materials, and not distinguished from any others in the town; it stands upon the south-west side of a large bay. There is water enough for large ships close to Arkeeko; but the bay being open to the north-east, makes it uneasy riding in blowing weather. Besides, you are upon a lee-shore; the bottom is composed of soft sand. In standing in upon Arkeeko from the sea through the canal between Shekh Seide and the main land, it is necessary to range the coast about a third nearer the main than the island. The point, or Shekh Seide, stretches far out, and has shallow water upon it.

The cape that forms the south-west side of the large

bay is called Ras Gedem; being the rocky base of a high mountain of that name, seen a considerable distance from sea, and distinguished by its form, which is that of a hog's back.

CHAP. III.

Journey from Arkeeko, over the mountain Taranta, to Dixan.

ACCORDING to Achmet's desire, we left Arkeeko the 15th, taking our road southward, along the plain, which is not here above a mile broad, and covered with short grass nothing different from ours, only that the blade is broader. After an hour's journey I pitched my tent at Laberhey, near a pit of rain water. The mountains of Abyssinia have a singular aspect from this, as they appear in three ridges. The first is of no considerable height, but full of gullies and broken ground, thinly covered with shrubs; the second, higher and steeper, still more rugged and bare; the third is a row of sharp, uneven-edged mountains, which would be counted high in any country in Europe. Far above the top of all towers that stupendous mass, the mountain of Taranta, I suppose one of the highest in the world, the point of which is buried in the clouds, and very rarely seen but in the clearest weather; at other times abandoned to perpetual mist and darkness, the seat of lightning, thunder, and of storm.

Taranta is the highest of a long steep ridge of mountains, the boundary between the opposite seasons. On its east side, or towards the Red Sea, the rainy season is from October to April; and, on the western, or Abyssinian side, cloudy, rainy, and cold weather prevails from May to October.

In the evening, a messenger from the Naybe found us in our tent at Laberhey, and carried away our guide Saloome. It was not till the next day that he appeared again, and with him Achmet, the Naybe's nephew. Achmet made us deliver to him the thirteen pieces of Surat cloth, which was promised Saloome for his hire, and this, apparently, with that person's good will. He then changed four of the men whom the Naybe had furnished us for hire to carry our baggage, and put four others in their place; this, not without some murmuring on their part; but he peremptorily, and in seeming anger, dispatched them back to Arkeeko.

Achmet now came into the tent, called for coffee, and, while drinking it, said, "You are sufficiently persuaded that I am your friend; if you are not, it is too late now to convince you. It is necessary, however, to explain the reasons of what you see. You are not to go to Dobarwa, though it is the best road, the safest being preferable to the easiest. Saloome knows the road by Dixan as well as the other. You will be apt to curse me when you are toiling and sweating ascending Taranta, the highest mountain in Abyssinia, and on this account worthy your notice. You are then to consider if the fatigue of body you shall suffer in that passage is not overpaid by the absolute safety you will find yourselves in. Dobarwa belongs to the Naybe; and I cannot answer for the orders he may have given to his own servants; but Dixan is mine, although the people are much worse than those of Dobarwa. I have written to my officers there; they will behave the better to you for this; and as you are strong and robust, the best I can do for you is to send you by a rugged road, and a safe one."

Achmet again gave his orders to Saloome; and we, all rising, said the fedtah, or prayer of peace; which

being over, his servant gave him a narrow web of muslin, which, with his own hands, he wrapped round my head in the manner the better sort of Mahometans wear it at Dixan. He then parted, saying, "He that is your enemy is mine also; you shall hear of me by Mahomet Gibberti."

Thus finished a series of trouble and vexation, not to say danger, superior to any thing I ever before had experienced, and of which the bare recital (though perhaps too minute a one) will give but an imperfect idea. These wretches possess talents for tormenting and alarming, far beyond the power of belief; and, by laying a true sketch of them before a traveller, an author does him the most real service. In this country, the more truly we draw the portrait of man, the more we seem to fall into caricatura.

On the 16th, in the evening, we left Laberhey; and after continuing about an hour along the plain, our grass ended, the ground becoming dry, firm, and gravelly, and we then entered into a wood of acacia trees of considerable size. We now began to ascend gradually, having Gedem, the high mountain which forms the bay of Arkeeko, on our left, and these same mountains, which bound the plain of Arkeeko, to the west, on our right. We encamped this night on a rising ground called Shillokeeb, where there is no water, though the mountains were everywhere cut through with gullies and water-courses, made by the violent rains that fall here in winter.

The 17th, we continued along the same plain, still covered thick with acacia trees. They were then in blossom, had a round yellow flower, but we saw no gum upon the trees. Our direction has hitherto been south. We turned westerly through an opening in the mountains, which here stand so close together as

to leave no valley or plain space between them but what is made by the torrents, in the rainy season, forcing their way with great violence to the sea.

The bed of the torrent was our only road; and, as it was all sand, we could not wish for a better. The moisture it had strongly imbibed protected it from the sudden effect of the sun, and produced, all along its course, a great degree of vegetation and verdure. Its banks were full of rack-trees, capers, and tamarinds; the two last bearing larger fruit than I had ever before seen, though not arrived to their greatest size or maturity.

We continued this winding, according to the course of the river, among mountains of no great height, but bare, stoney, and full of terrible precipices. At half past eight o'clock we halted, to avoid the heat of the sun, under shade of the trees before mentioned; for it was then excessively hot, though in the month of November, from ten in the morning till two in the afternoon. We met this day with large numbers of Shiho, having their wives and families along with them, descending from the tops of the high mountains of Habbesh, with their flocks to pasture, on the plains below near the sea, upon grass that grows up in the months of October and November, when they have already consumed what grew in the opposite season on the other side of the mountains.

This change of domicil gives them a propensity to thieving and violence, though otherwise a cowardly tribe. It is a proverb in Abyssinia, "Beware of men that drink two waters;" meaning these, and all the tribes of Shepherds, who were in search of pasture, and who have lain under the same imputation from the remotest antiquity.

The Shiho were once very numerous; but, like all

these nations having communication with Masuah, have suffered much by the ravages of the small-pox. The Shiho are the blackest of the tribes bordering upon the Red Sea. They were all clothed; their women in coarse cotton shifts reaching down to their angles, girt about the middle with a leather belt, and having very large sleeves; the men in short cotton breeches reaching to the middle of their thighs, and a goat's skin across their shoulders. They have neither tents nor cottages, but either live in caves in the mountains under trees, or in small conical huts built with a thick grass like reeds.

This party consisted of about fifty men, and, I suppose, not more than thirty women; from which it seemed probable the Shiho were monogamists, as afterwards, indeed, I knew them to be. Each of them had a lance in his hand, and a knife at the girdle which kept up the breeches. They had the superiority of the ground, as coming down the mountain which we were ascending; yet I observed them to seem rather uneasy at meeting us; and so far from any appearance of hostility, that I believe, had we attacked briskly, they would have fled without much resistance. They were indeed, incumbered with a prodigious quantity of goats and other cattle, so were not in a fighting trim. I saluted the man that seemed to be their chief, and asked him if he would sell us a goat. He returned my salute; but either could not speak Arabic, or declined further conversation. However, those of our people behind, that were of a colour nearer to themselves, bought us a goat that was lame (dearly they said), for some antimony, four large needles, and some beads. Many of them asked us for kisserah, or bread. This being an Arabic word, and their having no other word in their language signifying bread, convinces me they were ichthyophagi; as,

indeed, history says all those Troglodyte nations were who lived upon the Red Sea. It could not indeed be otherwise: the rich, when trade flourished in these parts, would probably get corn from Arabia or Abyssinia; but, in their own country, no corn would grow.

At 2 o'clock in the afternoon we resumed our journey through a very stoney, uneven road, till 5 o'clock, when we pitched our tent at a place called Hamhammou, on the side of a small green hill some hundred yards from the bed of the torrent. The weather had been perfectly good since we left Masuah: this afternoon, however, it seemed to threaten rain; the high mountains were quite hid, and great part of the lower ones covered with thick clouds; the lightning was very frequent, broad, and deep tinged with blue; and long peals of thunder were heard, but at a distance. This was the first sample we had of Abyssinian bad weather.

The river scarcely ran at our passing it; when all on a sudden, we heard a noise on the mountains above, louder than the loudest thunder. Our guides, upon this, flew to the baggage, and removed it to the top of the green hill; which was no sooner done, than we saw the river coming down in a stream about the height of a man, and the breadth of the whole bed it used to occupy. The water was thick tinged with red earth, and ran in the form of a deep river, and swelled a little above its banks, but did not reach our station on the hill.

An antelope, surprised by the torrent, and I believe hurt by it, was forced over into the peninsula where we were, seemingly in great distress. As soon as my companions saw there was no further danger from the river, they surrounded this innocent comrade in misfortune, and put him to death with very little

trouble to themselves. The acquisition was not great; it was lean, had a musky taste, and was worse meat than the goat we had bought from the Shiho. The torrent, though now very sensibly diminished, still preserved a current till next morning.

Between Hamhammou and Shillokeeb we first saw the dung of elephants, full of pretty thick pieces of indigested branches. We likewise, in many places, saw the tracks through which they had passed; some trees were thrown down from the roots, some broken in the middle, and branches half-eaten strewed on the ground.

Hamhammou is a mountain of black stones, almost calcined by the violent heat of the sun. This is the boundary of the district; Samhar, inhabited by the Shiho from Hamhammou to Taranta, is called Hadassa; it belongs to the Hazorta.

This nation, though not so numerous as the Shiho, are yet their neighbours, live in constant defiance of the Naybe, and are of a colour much resembling new copper; but are inferior to the Shiho in size, though very agile. All their substance is in cattle; yet they kill none of them, but live entirely upon milk. They, too, want also an original word for bread in their language, for the same reason, I suppose, as the Shiho. They have been generally successful against the Naybe, and live either in caves, or in cabannes, like cages, just large enough to hold two persons, and covered with an ox's hide. Some of the better sort of women have copper bracelets upon their arms, beads in their hair, and a tanned hide wrapt about their shoulders.

The nights are cold here even in summer, and do not allow the inhabitants to go naked as upon the rest of the coast; however, the children of the Shiho, whom we met first, were all naked.

The 18th, at half past five in the morning, we left our station on the side of the green hill at Hamhammou: for some time our road lay through a plain, so thick set with acacia-trees, that our hands and faces were all torn and bloody with the strokes of their thorny branches. We then resumed our ancient road in the bed of the torrent, now nearly dry, over stones which the rain of the preceding night had made very slippery.

At half past seven we came to the mouth of a narrow valley, through which a stream of water ran very swiftly over a bed of pebbles. It was the first clear water we had seen since we left Syria, and gave us then unspeakable pleasure. It was in taste excellent. The shade of the tamarind-tree, and the coolness of the air, invited us to rest on this delightful spot, though otherwise, perhaps, it was not exactly conformable to the rules of prudence, as we saw several huts and families of the Hazorta along the side of the stream, with their flocks feeding on the branches of trees and bushes, entirely neglectful of the grass they were treading under foot.

The caper-tree here grows as high as the tallest English elm; its flower is white, and its fruit, though not ripe, was fully as large as an apricot.

I went at some distance to a small pool of water in order to bathe, and took my firelock with me; but none of the savages stirred from their huts, nor seemed to regard me more than if I had lived among them all their lives, though surely I was the most extraordinary sight they had ever seen; whence I concluded that they are a people of small talents or genius, having no curiosity.

At two o'clock we continued our journey, among large timber trees, till half past three, along the side of the rivulet, when we lost it. At half past four we

pitched our tent at Sadoon, by the side of another stream, as clear, as shallow, and as beautiful as the first; but the night here was exceedingly cold, though the sun had been hot in the day-time. Our desire for water was, by this time, considerably abated. We were everywhere surrounded by mountains, bleak, bare, black, and covered with loose stones, entirely destitute of soil; and, besides this gloomy prospect, we saw nothing but the heavens.

On the 19th at half past six in the morning, we left Sadoon, our road still winding between mountains in the bed, or torrent of a river, bordered on each side with rack and sycamore trees of a good size. I thought them equal to the largest trees I ever had seen; but, upon considering, and roughly measuring some of them, I did not find one seven feet and a half diameter; a small tree in comparison of those that some travellers have observed, and much smaller than I expected; for here every cause concurred that could make the growth of these large bodies excessive.

At half past eight o'clock we encamped at a place called Tubbo, where the mountains are very steep, and broken, very abruptly, into cliffs and precipices. Tubbo was by much the most agreeable station we had seen; the trees were thick, full of leaves, and gave us abundance of very dark shade. There was a number of many different kinds, so closely planted that they seemed to be intended for natural arbours. Every tree was full of birds, variegated with an infinity of colours, but destitute of song; others, of a more homely and more European appearance, diverted us with a variety of wild notes, in a stile of music still distinct and peculiar to Africa; as different in the composition from our linnet and goldfinch, as our English language is to that of Abyssinia. Yet, from very attentive and frequent observation, I found that the sky-

lark at Masuah sang the same notes as in England. It was observable, that the greatest part of the beautiful painted birds were of the jay, or magpie kind; nature seemed, by the fineness of their dress, to have marked them for children of noise and impertinence, but never to have intended them for pleasure or meditation.

The reason of the Hazorta making, as it were, a fixed station here at Tubbo, seems to be the great exuberancy of the foliage of these large trees. Their principal occupations seemed to be to cut down the branches most within their reach; and this, in a dry season, nearly stripped every tree; and, upon failure of these, they remove their flocks, whatever quantity of grass remained.

The sycamores constitute a large proportion of these trees, and they are everywhere loaded with figs; but the process of caprification being unknown to these savages, these figs come to nothing, which else might be a great resource for food at times, in a country which seems almost destitute of the necessaries of life.

We left Tubbo at three o'clock in the afternoon, and we wished to leave the neighbourhood of the Hazorta. At four, we encamped at Lila, where we passed the night in a narrow valley, full of trees and brushwood, by the side of a rivulet. These small, but delightful streams, which appear on the plain between Taranta and the sea, run only after October. When the summer rains in Abyssinia are ceasing, they begin again on the east side of the mountains; at other times, no running water is to be found here, but it remains stagnant in large pools, whilst its own depth, or the shade of the mountains and trees, prevents it from being exhaled by the heat of the sun till they are again replenished with fresh supplies, which

are poured into them upon return of the rainy season. Hitherto we had constantly ascended from our leaving Arkeeko, but it was very gradually, indeed almost imperceptibly.

On the 20th, at six o'clock in the morning, we left our station at Lila, and about seven we began to ascend the hills, or eminences, which serve as the roots, or skirts, of the great mountain Taranta. The road was on each side bordered with nabca, or jujeb trees of great beauty, and sycamores perfectly deprived of their verdure and branches.

We saw to-day plenty of game. The country here is everywhere deprived of the shade it would enjoy from these fine trees, by the barbarous axes of the Hazorta. We found everywhere immense flocks of antelopes; as also partridges of a small kind, that willingly took refuge upon trees; neither of these seemed to consider us as enemies. The antelopes let us pass through their flocks, only removing to the right or to the left, or standing still and gazing upon us till we passed. But, as we were then on the confines of Tigre, or rather on the territory of the Baharnagash, and as the Hazorta were in motion everywhere removing towards the coast, far from the dominions of the Abyssinians to which we were going, a friend of their own tribe, who had joined us for safety, knowing how little trust was to be put in his countrymen, when moving in this contrary direction, advised us by no means to fire, or give any unnecessary indication of the spot where we were, till we gained the mountain of Taranta, at the foot of which we halted at nine in the morning.

At half past two o'clock in the afternoon we began to ascend the mountain, through a most rocky, uneven road, if it can deserve the name, not only from its incredible steepness, but from the large holes and gul-

lies made by the torrents, and the huge monstrous fragments of rocks, which, loosened by the water, had been tumbled down into our way. It was with great difficulty we could creep up, each man carrying his knapsack and arms; but it seemed beyond the possibility of human strength to carry our baggage and instruments. Our tent, indeed, suffered nothing by its falls; but our telescopes, time-keeper, and quadrant, were to be treated in a more deliberate and tender manner.

Our quadrant had hitherto been carried by eight men, four to relieve each other; but these were ready to give up the undertaking upon trial of the first few hundred yards. A number of expedients, such as trailing it on the ground (all equally fatal to the instrument), were proposed. At last, as I was incomparably the strongest of the company, as well as the most interested, I, and a stranger Moor, who had followed us, carried the head of it for about 400 yards over the most difficult and steepest part of the mountain, which before had been considered as impracticable by all.

Yasine was the name of that Moor, recommended to me by Metical Aga, of whom I have already spoken a little, and shall be obliged to say much more; a person whom I had discovered to be a man of a most sagacious turn of mind, firm heart, and strenuous nerves; never more distinguished for all these qualities than in the hour of imminent danger; at other times remarkable for quietness and silence, and a constant study of his Koran.

We carried it steadily up the steep, eased the case gently over the big stones on which, from time to time, we rested it; and, to the wonder of them all, placed the head of the three-foot quadrant, with its double case, in safety, far above the stoney parts of the mountain. At Yasine's request we again undertook

the next most difficult task, which was to carry the iron foot of the quadrant in a single deal case, not so heavy, indeed, nor so liable to injury, but still what had been pronounced impossible to carry up so steep and rugged a mountain; and refusing then the faint offers of those that stood gazing below, excusing themselves by foretelling an immediate and certain miscarriage, we placed the second case about ten yards above the first in perfect condition.

Declaring ourselves now, without fear of contradiction, and, by the acknowledgment of all, upon fair proof, the two best men in the company, we returned, bearing very visibly the characters of such an exertion; our hands and knees were all cut, mangled, and bleeding, with sliding down and clambering over the sharp points of the rocks; our clothes torn to pieces; yet we professed our ability, without any reproaches on our comrades, to carry the two telescopes and time-keeper also. Shame, and the proof of superior constancy, so much humbled the rest of our companions, that one and all put their hands so briskly to work, that, with infinite toil, and as much pleasure, we advanced so far as to place all our instruments and baggage, about two o'clock in the afternoon, near half way up this terrible mountain of Taranta.

There were five asses, two of which belonged to Yasine, and these were fully as difficult to bring up the mountain as any of our burdens. Most of their loading, the property of Yasine, we carried up the length of my instruments; and, it was proposed, as a thing that one man could do, to make the unladen light asses follow, as they had been well taken care of, were vigorous and young, and had not suffered by the short journies we had made on plain ground. They no sooner, however, found themselves at liberty, and that a man was compelling them with a stick

to ascend the mountain, than they began to bray, to kick, and to bite each other; and, as it were with one consent, not only ran down the part of the hill we had ascended, but, with the same jovial cries as before, (smelling, I suppose, some of their companions) they continued on at a brisk trot; and, as we supposed, would never stop till they came to Tubbo, and the huts of the Hazorta.

All our little caravan, and especially the masters of these animals, saw from above, in despair, all our eagerness to pass Taranta defeated by the secession of the most obstinate of the brute creation. But there was no mending this by reflection; at the same time, we were so tired as to make it impossible for the principals to give any assistance. Bread was to be baked, and supper to be made ready, after this fatiguing journey.

At length four Moors, one of them a servant of Yasine, with one firelock, were sent down after the asses; and the men were ordered to fire at a distance, so as to be heard in case any thing dishonest was offered on the part of the Hazorta. But, luckily, the appetite of the asses returning, they had fallen to eat the bushes, about half way to Lila, where they were found a little before sun-set.

The number of hyænas that are everywhere among the bushes, had, as we supposed, been seen by these animals, and had driven them all into a body. It was probable that this, too, made them more docile, so that they suffered themselves to be driven on before their masters. The hyænas, however, followed them step by step, always increasing in number; and, the men, armed only with lances, began to be fully as much afraid for themselves as for the asses. At last the hyænas became so bold, that one of them seized the ass belonging to the poor Moor, whose cargo was

yet lying at the foot of Taranta, and pulled him down, though the man ran to him and relieved him with lances. This would have begun a general engagement with the hyænas, had not Yasine's man, that carried the firelock, discharged it amongst them, but missed them all. However, it answered the purpose; they disappeared, and left the asses and ass-drivers to pursue their way.

The shot, for a moment, alarmed us all upon the mountain. Every man ran to his arms to prepare for the coming of the Hazorta; but a moment's reflection upon the short time the men had been away; the distance between us and Tubbo; and the small space that it seemed to be from where the gun was fired, made us all conclude the man had only intended by the shot to let us know they were at hand, though it was not till near midnight before our long-eared companions joined their masters.

We found it impossible to pitch our tents, from the extreme weariness in which our last night's exertion had left us: But there was another reason also; for there was not earth enough covering the bare sides of Taranta to hold fast a ten-pin; but there were variety of caves near us, and throughout the mountain, which had served for houses to the old inhabitants; and in these we found a quiet and not inconvenient place of repose, the night of the 20th of November.

All this side of the mountain of Taranta, which we had passed, was thick-set with a species of tree which we had never before seen, but which was of uncommon beauty and curious composition of parts; its name is kol-quall *. Though we afterwards met it in

* See the article kol quall in the Appendix.

several places of Abyssinia, it never was in the perfection we now saw it in Taranta.

On the 21st, at half past six in the morning, having encouraged my company with good words, increase of wages, and hopes of reward, we began to encounter the other half of the mountain, but, before we set out, seeing that the ass of the stranger Moor, which was bit by the hyæna, was incapable of carrying his loading further, I desired the rest every one to bear a proportion of the loading till we should arrive at Dixan, where I promised to procure him another, which might enable him to continue his journey.

This proposal gave universal satisfaction to our Mahometan attendants. Yasine swore, that my conduct was a reproach to them all; for that, though a Christian, I had set them an example of charity to their poor brother, highly necessary to procure God's blessing upon their journey, but which should properly have come first from themselves. After a great deal of strife of kindness, it was agreed that I should pay one-third, that the lame ass should go for what it was worth, and that the Moors of the caravan should make up the difference.

This being ended, I soon perceived the good effect. My baggage moved much more briskly than the preceding day. The upper part of the mountain was, indeed, steeper, more craggy, rugged, and slippery than the lower, and impeded much more with trees, but not embarrassed so much with large stones and holes. Our knees and hands, however, were cut to pieces by frequent falls, and our faces torn by the multitude of thorny bushes. I twenty times now thought of what Achmet had told me at parting, that I should curse him for the bad road shewn to me over Taranta; but bless him for the quiet and safety attending me in that passage.

The middle of the mountain was thinner of trees than the two extremes; they were chiefly wild olives which bear no fruit. The upper part was close covered with groves of the oxycedrus, the Virginia, or berry-bearing cedar, in the language of the country called Arze. At last we gained the top of the mountain, upon which is situated a small village, called Halai, the first we had seen since our leaving Masuah. It is chiefly inhabited by poor servants and shepherds, keeping the flocks of men of substance living in the town of Dixan.

The people here are not black, but of a dark complexion bordering very much upon yellow. They have their head bare; their feet covered with sandals; a goat's skin upon their shoulders; a cotton cloth about their middle; their hair short and curled, like that of a negroe's in the west part of Africa; but this is done by art, not by nature, each man having a wooden stick with which he lays hold of the lock, and twists it round a screw, till it curls in the form he desires *. The men carry in their hands two lances and a large shield of bull's hide. A crooked knife, the blade in the lower part about three inches broad, but diminishing to a point, about sixteen inches long, is stuck at their right side, in a girdle of coarse cotton cloth, with which their middle is swathed, going round them six times.

All sorts of cattle are here in great plenty; cows and bulls of exquisite beauty, especially the former; they are, for the most part, completely white, with large dewlaps hanging down to their knees; their

* I apprehend this is the same instrument used by the ancients, and censured by the prophet , which, in our translation, is rendered crisping pins. Isaiah, chap. iii. ver. 22.

neads, horns, and hoofs perfectly well-turned; the horns wide, like our Lincolnshire kine; and their hair like silk. Their sheep are large, and all black. I never saw one of any other colour in the province of Tigre. Their heads are large; their ears remarkably short and small; instead of the wool they have hair, as all the sheep within the tropics have; but this is remarkable for its lustre and softness, without any bristly quality, such as those in Beja, or the country of Sennaar; but they are neither so fat, nor is their flesh so good, as that of the sheep in the warmer country. The goats here, too, are of the largest size; but they are not very rough, nor is their hair long.

The plain on the top of the mountain Taranta was, in many places, sown with wheat, which was then ready to be cut down, though the harvest was not yet begun. The grain was clean, and of a good colour, but inferior in size to that of Egypt. It did not, however, grow thick, nor was the stalk above fourteen inches high. The water is very bad on the top of Taranta, being only what remains of the rain in the hollows of the rocks, and in pits prepared for it.

Being very tired, we pitched our tent on the top of the mountain. The night was remarkably cold, at least appeared so to us, whose pores were opened by the excessive heat of Masuah; for at mid-day the thermometer stood 61°, and at six in the evening 59°; the barometer, at the same time, 18¼ inches French. The dew began to fall strongly, and so continued till an hour after sun-set, though the sky was perfectly clear, and the smallest stars discernible.

I killed a large eagle here this evening, about six feet ten inches from wing to wing. It seemed very tame till shot. The ball having wounded it but slightly, when on the ground it could not be prevented from attacking the men or beasts near it with great

force and fierceness, so that I was obliged to stab it with a bayonet. It was of a dirty white; only the head and upper part of its wings were of a light brown.

On the 22d, at eight in the morning, we left our station on the top of Taranta, and soon after began to descend on the side of Tigre, through a road the most broken and uneven that ever I had seen, always excepting the ascent of Taranta. After this we began to mount a small hill, from which we had a distinct view of Dixan.

The cedar-trees, so tall and beautiful on the top of Taranta, and also on the east side, were greatly degenerated when we came to the west, and mostly turned into small shrubs and scraggy bushes. We pitched our tent near some marshy ground, for the sake of water, at three quarters past ten; but it was very bad, having been, for several weeks, stagnant. We saw here the people busy at their wheat harvest; others, who had finished theirs, were treading it out with cows or bullocks. They make no use of their straw; sometimes they burn it, and sometimes leave it on the spot to rot.

We set out from this about ten minutes after three, descending gently through a better road than we had hitherto seen. At half past four in the evening, on the 22d of November, we came to Dixan. Halai was the first village, so is this the first town in Abyssinia, on the side of Taranta. Dixan is built on the top of a hill, perfectly in the form of a sugar loaf; a deep valley surrounds it everywhere like a trench, and the road winds spirally up the hill, till it ends among the houses.

This town, with a large district, and a considerable number of villages, belonged formerly to the Baharnagash, and was one of the strong places under his

command. Afterwards, when his power came to be weakened, and his office in disrepute by his treasonable behaviour in the war with the Turks, and civil war that followed it, during the Portuguese settlement in the reign of Socinios, the Turks possessing the seaports, and being often in intelligence with him, it was thought proper to wink at the usurpations of the governors of Tigre, who, little by little, reduced this office to be dependent on their power.

Dixan, presuming upon its strength, declared for independence, in the time the two parties were contending; and, as it was inhabited mostly by Mahometans, it was secretly supported by the Naybe. Michael Suhul, however, governor of Tigre, in the reign of King Yasous II. invested it with a large army of horse and foot; and, as it had no water but what was in the valley below, the general defect of these lofty situations, he surrounded the town, encamping upon the edge of the valley, and inclosed all the water within his line of circumvallation, making strong posts at every watering-place, defended by fire-arms.

He then sent to them a buffoon, or dwarf, desiring them to surrender within two hours. The passions of the inhabitants were, however, raised by expectations of succour from the Naybe; and they detested Michael above every thing that could be imagined. They, therefore, whipt the dwarf, and inflicted other marks of contumely upon him. Michael bore this with seeming indifference. He sent no more summonses, but strengthened his posts, and ordered them to be continually visited. Several attacks of no consequence were made by the besieged, following large stones, which were rolled down into the trench; but all to no purpose. A general attack, however, from the town, was tried the third day, by which one well was carried, and many relieved their thirst; many

died there, and the rest were forced back into the town. A capitulation was now offered; but Michael answered, he waited for the coming of the Naybe. About 700 people are said to have died, during the siege, with thirst; and at last, there being no prospect of relief, twelve of the leaders were delivered and hanged up at the wells. The town surrendered at discretion, and the soldiers finished those whom thirst had spared.

Michael then farmed Dixan to the Naybe, who repeopled it. There was a high and low town, divided from each other by a considerable space. In the lower abode Christians, at least so calling themselves; on the top of the hill were the Naybe's party, who had dug for themselves a scanty well. Saloome, our guide, was son of the governor for the Naybe. Achmet was the person the Moors in the low town had confided in; and the Christian chief was a dependent upon Janni, our Greek friend at Adowa, who had direction of all the custom-houses in Tigre, and of that at Dixan among the rest.

Our baggage had passed the trench, and had reached the low town, through which Saloome had conducted me, under pretence of getting a speedy shelter from the heat: but he overacted his part; and Janni's servant, who spoke Greek, giving me a hint to go no further, I turned short towards the custom-house, and sat down with my fire-lock upon a stone at the door. Our baggage quickly followed, and all was put safe in a kind of court, inclosed with a sufficient stone wall.

It was not long till Hagi Abdelcader, Achmet's friend, came to us, inviting me civilly to his house, and declaring to me the friendly orders he had received from Achmet concerning me; bringing along with him also a goat, some butter and honey. I excused myself from leaving Janni's friend, the Chris-

tian, where I had first alighted; but I recommended Yasine to him, for he had begun to shew great attachment to me. In about a quarter of an hour came Saloome, with about twenty men, and demanded us, in the name of the Naybe, as his strangers: he said we owed him money for conducting us, and likewise for the custom-house dues. In a moment, near a hundred men were assembled round Hagi Abdelcader, all with shields and lances, and we expected to see a fray of the most serious kind. But Abdelcader, with a switch in his hand, went gravely up to Saloome, and, after chiding his party with great authority, he held up his stick twice over Saloome's head, as if to strike him; then ordered him, if he had any demands, to come to him in the evening; upon which both parties dispersed, and left us in peace.

The matter was settled in the evening with Saloome in an amicable manner. It was proved that thirteen pieces of blue cloth were the hire agreed on, and that it had been paid by his order to Achmet; and, though he deserved nothing for his treacherous inclinations towards us, yet, for Achmet's sake, and our friend Hagi Abdelcader's, we made him a present of three pieces more.

It is true of Dixan, as, I believe, of most frontier towns, that the bad people of both contiguous countries resort thither. The town, as I before have said, consists of Moors and Christians, and is very well peopled; yet the only trade of either of these sects is a very extraordinary one, that of selling children. The Christians bring such as they have stolen in Abyssinia to Dixan, as to a sure deposit; and the Moors receive them there, and carry them to a certain market at Masuah, whence they are sent over to Arabia or India. The priests of the province of Tigre, especially those near the rock Damo, are openly concerned in this infamous practice; and some of these hav

been licensed by Michael to carry it on as a fair trade, upon paying so many firelocks for each dozen or score of slaves.

Nothing can elucidate the footing upon which this trade stands, better than a transaction which happened while I was in Ethiopia, and which reached Gondar by way of complaint from Masuah, and was told me by Michael himself.

Two priests of Tigre, whose names I have forgot, had been long intimate friends. They dwelt near the rock Damo. The youngest was married, and had two children, both sons; the other was old, and had none. The old one reproved his friend one day for keeping his children at home idle, and not putting them to some profession by which they might gain their bread. The married priest pleaded his poverty, and his want of relations that could assist him; on which, the old priest offered to place his eldest son with a rich friend of his own, who had no children, and where he should want for nothing. The proposal was accepted, and the young lad, about ten years of age, was delivered by his father to the old priest, to carry him to his friend, who took the boy to Dixan, and sold him there. Upon the old priest's return, after giving the father a splendid account of his son's reception, treatment, and prospects, he gave him a piece of cotton cloth, as a present from his son's patron.

The younger child, about eight years old, hearing the good fortune of his elder brother, became so importunate to be allowed to go and visit him, that the parents were obliged to humour him, and consent. But the old priest had a scruple, saying he would not take the charge of so young a boy, unless his mother went with him. This being settled, the old priest conveyed them to the market at Dixan, where he sold both the mother and remaining child.

Returning to the father, the old priest told him, that his wife would only stay so long, and expected he would then fetch her upon a certain day, which was named. The day being come, the two priests went together to see this happy family; and, upon their entering Dixan, it was found that the old priest had sold the young one, but not to the same Moor to whom he had sold his family. Soon after, these two Moors, who had bought the Christians, becoming partners in the venture, the old priest was to receive forty cotton-cloths, that is, L. 10 Sterling, for the husband, wife, and children.

The payment of the money, perhaps the resentment of the family trepanned, and the appearance of equity which the thing itself bore, suggested to the Moorish merchants that there was some more profit, and not more risk, if they carried off the old priest likewise. But as he had come to Dixan, as it were under public faith, in a trade that greatly interested the town, they were afraid to attempt any thing against him whilst there. They began then as it were to repent of their bargain, from a pretended apprehension that they might be stopped and questioned at going out of town, unless he would accompany them to some small distance; in consideration of which, they would give him, at parting, two pieces of cloth to be added to the other forty, which he was to take back to Tigre with him upon his return.

The beginning of such expeditions is in the night. When all were asleep, they set out from Dixan; the buyers, the seller, and the family sold; and, being arrived near the mountain where the way turns off the desert, the whole party fell upon the old priest, threw him down, and bound him. The woman insisted that she might be allowed to cut, or tear off the little beard he had, in order, as she said, to make him

look younger; and this demand was reckoned too just to be denied her. The whole five were then carried to Masuah; the women and her two children were sold to Arabia; the two priests had not so ready a market, and they were both in the Naybe's house when I was at Masuah, though I did not then know it.

The Naybe, willing to ingratiate himself with Ras Michael at a small expence, wrote to him an account of the transaction, and offered, as they were priests, to restore them to him. But the Ras returned for answer, that the Naybe should keep them to be his chaplains; as he hoped, some day, he would be converted to the Christian faith himself; if not, he might send them to Arabia with the rest; they would serve to be carriers of wood and drawers of water; and that there still remained at Damo enough of their kind to carry on the trade with Dixan and Masuah.

This story I heard from Ras Michael himself, at his grand-daughter's marriage, when he was feasting, and in great spirits. He, and all the company, laughed heartily; and although there were in the room at least two dozen of priests, none of them seemed to take this incident more seriously than the rest of the company. From this we may guess at the truth of what the Catholic writers advance, with regard to the respect and reverence shewn to the priesthood by the government and great men in Abyssinia.

The priests of Axum, and those of the monastery of Abba Garima, are equally infamous with those of Damo for this practice, which is winked at by Ras Michael, as contributing to his greatness, by furnishing fire-arms to his province of Tigre, which gives him a superiority over all Abyssinia. As a return for this article, about five hundred of these unfortunate

people are exported annually from Masuah to Arabia; of which three hundred are Pagans, and come from the market at Gondar; the other two hundred are Christian Children, kidnapped by some such manner as this we have spoken of, and in times of scarcity four times that number. The Naybe receives six patakas of duty for each one exported. Dixan is in lat. 14° 57′ 55″ north, and long. 40° 7′ 30″ east of the meridian of Greenwich.

From Dixan we discovered great part of the province of Tigre full of high dreadful mountains. We, as yet, had seen very little grain, unless by the wayside from Taranta, and a small flat called Zarai, about four miles S. S. W. of the town *.

* Wednesday, 22d November, 4 h. 25 m. P. M. encamped at Dixan, from which are seen the following villages.

Seghinet N. N. W. at 3½ miles distant.
Gherghera, N. a little W. 6 miles dist.
Adegara, W. N. W. at 15 miles dist.
Agamli, W. N. W. 1 mile.
Serawe, W. S. W. 8 miles.
Zarai, S. S. W. 4 miles.

Transl. from the Ital. Journal.

Saturday, 25th, at 9½ A. M. left Dixan: at 9¾ passed the village Hadhadid: at 10½ encamped under a very large tree, called Werka in Arabic, Daro in Tigre; the leaves and bark are like those of a walnut tree, the leaves a little broader. It was 18 feet in circumference. the trunk, 16 feet, before the branches were found, and these reached all around, within four feet of the ground, forming a circle of 44 yards in diameter. It was full of milk, and bore fruit like a sycamore. on the sides of the branches. On this tree killed an ape, or monkey, called Waague in Tigre, and the pigeon called Waalia.

From Mr Bruce's own Journal.

CHAP. IV.

Journey from Dixan to Adowa, Capital of Tigrè.

It was on Nov. 25th, at ten in the morning, we left Dixan, descending the very steep hill on which the town is situated. It produces nothing but the Kol-quall tree all around it. We passed a miserable village called Hadhadid, and, at eleven o'clock, encamped under a daroo tree, one of the finest I have seen in Abyssinia, being 7½ feet diameter, with a head spreading in proportion, standing along by the side of a river which now ran no more, though there is plenty of fine water still stagnant in its bed. This tree and river is the boundary of the territory which the Naybe farms from Tigre, and stands within the province of Baharnagash, called Midre Bahar.

Hagi Abdelcader had attended us thus far before he left us; and the noted Saloome came likewise, to see if some occasion would offer of doing us further mischief; but the king's servants, now upon their own ground, began to take upon them a proper consequence. One of them went to meet Saloome at the bank of the river, and making a mark on the ground with his knife, declared that his patience was

quite exhausted by what he had been witness to at Masuah and Dixan; and if now Saloome, or any other man belonging to the Naybe, offered to pass that mark, he would bind him hand and foot, and carry him to a place where he should be left tied to a tree, a prey to the lion and hyæna. They all returned, and there our persecution from the Naybe ended. But it was very evident, from Achmet's behaviour and discourse, had we gone to Dobarwa, which was the road proposed by the Naybe, our sufferings would not have been as yet half finished, unless they had ended with our lives.

We remained under this tree the night of the 25th; it will be to me a station ever memorable, as the first where I recovered a portion of that tranquillity of mind to which I had been a stranger ever since my arrival at Masuah. We had been joined by about twenty loaded asses driven by Moors, and two loaded bulls; for there is a small sort of this kind called Ber, which they make use of as beasts of burden. I called all these together to recommend good order to them, desiring every one to leave me that was not resolved to obey implicitly the orders I should give them, as to the hours and places of encamping, keeping watch at night, and setting out in the morning. I appointed Yasine the judge of all disputes between them, and, if the difference should be between Yasine and any one of them, or, if they should not be content with his decision, then my determination was to be final. They all consented with great marks of approbation. We then repeated the fedtah, and swore to stand by each other till the last, without considering who the enemy might be, or what his religion was, if he attacked us.

The 26th, at seven in the morning, we left our most

pleasant quarters under the daroo-tree, and set forward with great alacrity. About a quarter of a mile from the river we crossed the end of the plain Zarai, already mentioned. Though this is but three miles long, and one where broadest, it was the largest plain we had seen since our passing Taranta, whose top was now covered wholly with large, black, and very heavy clouds, from which we heard and saw frequent peals of thunder, and violent streams of lightning. This plain was sown partly with wheat, partly with Indian corn; the first was cut down, the other not yet ripe. Two miles farther we passed Addicota, a village planted upon a high rock; the sides towards us were as if cut perpendicular like a wall. Here was one refuge of the Jesuits when banished Tigre by Facilidas, when they fled to the rebel John Akay. We after this passed a variety of small villages on each side of us, all on the tops of hills; Darcotta and Embabuwhat on the right, Azaria on the left.

At half an hour past eleven we encamped under a mountain, on the top of which is a village called Hadawi, consisting of no more than eighty houses, though, for the present, it is the seat of the Baharnagash. The present Baharnagash had bought the little district that he commanded, after the present governor of Tigre, Michael Suhul, had annexed to his own province what he pleased of the old domains, and farmed the other part to the Naybe for a larger revenue than he ever could get from any other tenant. The Naybe had now no longer a naval force to support him, and the fear of Turkish conquest had ceased in Tigre. The Naybe could be reduced within any bounds that the governor of Tigre might please to prescribe him; and the Baharnagash was a servant maintained to watch over him, and starve him into

obedience, by intercepting his provisions whenever the governor of Tigre commanded him.

This nobleman paid me a visit in my tent, and was the first Abyssinian I had seen on horseback; he had seven attendant horsemen with him, and about a dozen of others on foot, all of a beggarly appearance, and very ill-armed and equipped. He was a little man, of an olive complexion, or rather darker; his head was shaved close, with a cowl, or covering, upon it; he had a pair of short trowsers; his feet and legs were bare: the usual coarse girdle was wrapt several times about him, in which he stuck his knife; and the ordinary web of cotton cloth, neither new nor clean, was thrown about him. His parts seemed to be much upon the level with his appearance. He asked me, If I had ever seen horses before? I said, Very seldom. He then described their qualities in such a manner as would never have given me any idea of the animal if I had seen it seldom. He excused himself for not having sent us provisions, because he had been upon an expedition against some rebellious villages, and was then only just returned.

To judge by his present appearance, he was no very respectable personage; but in this I was mistaken, as I afterwards found. I gave him a present in proportion to the first idea, with which he seemed very well content, till he observed a number of fire-arms tied up to the pillar in the middle of the tent, among which were two large ship-blunderbusses. He asked me if there was no danger of their going off? I said, that it happened every now and then, when their time was come. A very little after this, he took the cushion upon which he sat, went out, and placed himself at the door of the tent. There the king's servant got hold of him and told him roundly, he must furnish us with a goat,

a kid, and forty loaves, and that immediately, and write it off in his deftar, or account-book, if he pleased. He then went away and sent us a goat and fifty cakes of teff bread.

But my views upon him did not end here. His seven horses were all in very bad order, though there was a black one among them that had particularly struck my fancy. In the evening I sent the king's servants, and Janni's, for a check, to try if he would sell that black horse. The bargain was immediately made for various pieces of goods, part of which I had with me, and part I procured from my companions in the caravan. Every thing was fashionable and new from Arabia. The value was about L. 12 Sterling, forty shillings more than our friend at Dixan had paid for a whole family of four persons. The goods were delivered, and the horse was to be sent in the evening, when he proved a brown one, old, and wanting an eye. I immediately returned the horse, insisting on the black one; but he protested the black horse was not his own; that he had returned it to its master; and, upon a little further discourse, said, that it was a horse he intended as a present for the king.

My friends treated this with great indifference, and desired their goods back again, which were accordingly delivered. But they were no sooner in the tent, when the black horse was sent, and refused. The whole, however, was made up, by sending us another goat, which I gave to Yasine, and two jars of bouza, which we drank among us, promising, according to the Baharnagash's request, we would represent him well at court. We found, from his servants, that he had been upon no expedition, nor one step from home for three months past.

I was exceedingly pleased with this first acquisition.

The horse was then lean, and he stood about sixteen and a half hands high, of the breed of Dongola. Yasine, a good horseman, recommended to me one of his servants or companions, to take care of him. He was an Arab, from the neighbourhood of Medina, a superior horseman himself, and well-versed in every thing that concerned the animal. I took him immediately into my service. We called the horse Mirza, a name of good fortune. Indeed, I might say, I acquired that day a companion that contributed always to my pleasure, and more than once to my safety; and was no slender means of acquiring me the first attention of the king. I had brought my Arab stirrups, saddle, and bridle, with me, so that I was now as well equipped as a horseman could be.

On the 27th we left Hadawi, continuing our journey down on a very steep and narrow path between two stoney hills; then ascending one still higher, upon the top of which stands the large village of Goumbubba, whence we have a prospect over a considerable plain, all sown with the different grain this country produces, wheat, barley, teff, and tocusso; simsim (or sesame), and nook; the last is used for oil.

We passed the village of Dergate, then that of Regticat, on the top of a very high hill on the left, as the other was on our right. We pitched our tent about half a mile off the village called Barranda, where we were overtaken by our friend the Baharnagash, who was so well pleased with our last interview, especially the bargain of the horse, that he sent us three goats, two jars of honey-wine, and some wheat-flour. I invited him to my tent, which he immediately accepted. He was attended by two servants on foot, and some horsemen with lances and shields; he had no arms himself, but, by way of amends, had two drums

beating, and two trumpets blowing before him, sounding a charge *.

He seemed to be a very simple, good-natured man, indeed remarkably so; a character rarely found in any degree of men in this country. He asked me how I liked my horse? said, he hoped I did not intend to mount it myself? I answered, God forbid; I kept him as a curiosity. He commended my prudence very much, and gave me a long detail about what horses had done, and would do, on occasions. Some of the people without, however, shewed his servants my saddle, bridle and stirrups, which they well knew, from being neighbours to the Arabs of Sennaar, and praised me as a better horseman by far than any one in that country; this they told to the Baharnagash, who, nothing offended, laughed heartily at the pretended ignorance I had shewn him, and shook me very kindly by the hand, and told me he was really poor, or he would have taken no money from me for the horse. He shewed so much good nature, and open honest behaviour, that I gave him a present better than the first, and which was more agreeable, as less expected. Razors, knives, steels for striking fire, are the most valuable presents in this country, of the hardware kind.

The Baharnagash now was in such violent good

* Michael had imprisoned the late Baharnagash, whose brother now filled his office. The Baharnagash was preceded by some horsemen, with lances and shields, and two long horns and a drum. The former were made of canes very artificially joined together, and covered with goat skins. The mouth-pieces were much in the form of ours, but of wood; the other end made of a courge or gourd. They were about 4½ feet long, and had a very clear and loud tone. The drum was long and narrow, much like that the Provencals make use of with the tabor. *Extract* from Mr Bruce's Journal. These are the nagareet and nesserkano, insigns of provincial governors.—E.

spirits, that he would not go home till he had seen a good part of his jar of hydromel finished; and he little knew, at that time, he was in the tent with a man who was to be his chief customer for horses hereafter. I saw him several times after at court, and did him some services, both with the king and Ras Michael. He had a quality which I then did not know: With all his simplicity and buffoonery, no one was braver in his own person than he; and, together with his youngest son, he died afterwards in the king's defence, fighting bravely at the battle of Serbraxos.

At five o'clock this afternoon we had a violent shower of hailstones. Nothing is more common than aggravation about the size of hail; but, stooping to take up one I thought as large as a nutmeg, I received a blow from another just under my eye, which I imagined had blinded me, and which occasioned a swelling all the next day.

I had gained the Baharnagash's heart so entirely, that it was not possible to get away the next day. We were upon the very verge of his small dominions, and he had ordered a quantity of wheat-flour to be made for us, which he sent in the evening, with a kid. For my part, the share I had taken yesterday of his hydromel had given me such a pain in my head that I scarce could raise it the whole day.

It was the 29th we left our station at Barranda, and had scarcely advanced a mile when we were overtaken by a party of about twenty armed men on horseback. The Shangalla, the ancient Cushites, are all the way on our right hand, and frequently venture incursions into the flat country that was before us. This was the last piece of attention of the Baharnagash, who sent his party to guard us from danger in the plain. It awakened us from our security; we ex-

amined carefully the state of our fire-arms; cleaned and charged them anew, which we had not done since the day we left Dixan.

The first part of our journey to-day was in a deep gully; and in half an hour, we entered into a very pleasant wood of acacia trees, then in flower. In it likewise was a tree, in smell like a honeysuckle, whose large white flower nearly resembles that of a caper. We came out of this wood into the plain, and ascended two easy hills; upon the top of these were two huge rocks, in the holes of which, and within a large cave, a number of the blue fork-tailed swallows had begun their nests. These, and probably many, if not all the birds of passage, breed twice in the year, which seems a provision against the losses made by emigration, perfectly consonant to divine wisdom. These rocks are, by some, said to be the boundaries of the command of the Baharnagash on this side; though others extend them to the Balezat.

We entered again a straggling wood, so overgrown with wild oats that it covered the men and their horses. The plain here is very wide. It reaches down on the west to Serawe, then distant about twelve miles. It extends from Goumbubba, as far south as Balezat. The soil is excellent; but such flat countries are very rare in Abyssinia This, which is one of the finest and widest, is abandoned without culture, and is in a state of waste. The reason of this is, an inveterate feud between the villages here and those of Serawe; so that the whole inhabitants, on each side, go armed to plow and to sow on one day; and it is very seldom either of them complete their harvest without having a battle with their enemies and neighbours.

Before we entered this wood, and, indeed, on the preceding day, from the time we left Hadawi, we had seen a very extraordinary bird at a distance, resem-

bling a wild Turkey, which ran exceedingly fast, and appeared in great flocks. It is called Erkoom*, in Amhara; Abba Gumba, in Tigre; and, towards the frontiers of Sennaar, Tier el Naciba, or, the Bird of Destiny.

Our guides assembled us all in a body, and warned us that the river before us was the place of the rendezvous of the Serawe horse, where many caravans had been entirely cut off. The cavalry is the best on this side of Abyssinia. They keep up the breed of their horses by their vicinity to Sennaar, whence they get supply. Nevertheless, they behaved very ill at the battle of Limjour; and I cannot say I remember them to have distinguished themselves anywhere else. They were on our right at the battle of Serbraxos, and were beat by the horse of Foggora and the Galla.

After passing the wood, we came to the river, which was then standing in pools. I here, for the first time, mounted on horseback, to the great delight of my companions from Barranda, and also of our own, none of whom had ever before seen a gun fired from a horse galloping, excepting Yasine and his servant, now my groom, but neither of these had ever seen a double-barrelled gun. We passed the plain with all the diligence consistent with the speed and capacity of our long-eared convoy; and, having now gained the hills, we bade defiance to the Serawe horse, and sent our guard back perfectly content, and full of wonder at our fire-arms, declaring that their master, the Baharnagash, had he seen the black horse behave that day, would have given me another much better.

* See the article Erkoom in the Appendix.

We entered now into a close country covered with brushwood, wild oats, and high bent grass; in many places rocky and uneven, so as scarce to leave a narrow part to pass. Just in the very entrance, a lion had killed a very fine animal called Agazan. It is of the goat kind; and, excepting a small variety in colour, is precisely the same animal I had seen in Barbary, near Capsa. It might be about twelve stone weight, and of the size of a large ass. (Whenever I mention a stone weight, I would wish to be understood horseman's weight, fourteen pound to the stone, as most familiar to the generality of those who read these Travels.) The animal was scarcely dead; the blood was running; and the noise of my gun had probably frightened its conqueror away; every one with their knives cut off a large portion of flesh; Moors and Christians did the same; yet the Abyssinians' aversion to any thing that is dead is such, unless killed regularly by the knife, that none of them would lift any bird that was shot, unless by the point or extreme feather of its wing. Hunger was not the excuse, for they had been plentifully fed all this journey; so that the distinction, in this particular case, is to be found in the manners of the country. They say they may lawfully eat what is killed by the lion, but not by the tiger, hyæna, or any other beast. Where they learned this doctrine, I believe, would not be easy to answer; but it is remarkable, even the Falasha themselves admit this distinction in favour of lions.

At noon we crossed the river Balezat, which rises at Ade Shiho, a place on the S. W. of the province of Tigre; and, after no very long course, having been once the boundary between Tigre and Midre Bahar (for so the country of the Bahurnagash was called), it falls into the Mareb, or ancient Astusaspes. It was the first river, then actually running, that we

had seen since we passed Taranta; indeed, all the space is but very indifferently watered. This stream is both clear and rapid, and seems to be full of fish. We continued for some time along its banks, the river on our left, and the mountains on our right, through a narrow plain, till we came to Tomumbusso, a high pyramidal mountain, on the top of which is a convent of monks, who do not, however, reside there, but only come hither upon certain feasts, when they keep open house and entertain all that visit them. The mountain itself is of porphyry.

There we encamped by the river's side, and were obliged to stay this and the following day, for a duty or custom, to be paid by all passengers. These duties are called Awides, which signifies gifts; though they are levied, for the most part, in a very rigorous and rude manner; but they are established by usage in particular spots; and are, in fact, a regality annexed to the estate. Such places are called *Ber* or *passes*; which is often met with in the names of places throughout Abyssinia, as Dingleber, Sankraber, and so forth.

There are five of these Awides, which, like turnpikes, are to be paid at passing between Masuah and Adowa; one at Samhar, the second at Dixan, the third at Darghat, the fourth here at Balezat, and the fifth at Kella. The small village of Sebow was distant from us two miles to the east; Zarow the same distance to the S. S. E. and Noguet, a village before us, were the places of abode of these tax-gatherers, who farm it for a sum from their superior, and divide the profit *pro rata* of the sums each has advanced. It is much of the same nature as the caphar in the Levant, but levied in a much more uncivil and arbitrary manner. The farmer of this duty values as he thinks proper what each caravan is to pay; there is no tariff, or

restraint upon him. Some have on this account been detained months; and others, in time of trouble or bad news, have been robbed of every thing: this is always the case upon the least resistance; for then the villages around you rise in arms; you are not only stript of your property, but sure to be ill-treated in your person.

As I was sent for by the king, and going to Ras Michael, in whose province they were, I affected to laugh when they talked of detaining me; and declared peremptorily to them, that I would leave all my baggage to them with great pleasure, rather than that the king's life should be in danger by my stay. They were now staggered, and seemed not prepared for an incident of this kind. As I kept up a high tone, we were quit with being detained a day, by paying five pieces of blue Surat cotton cloth, value ½ of a pataka each, and one piece of white, value one pataka. Our companions rather than stay behind, made the best bargain they could; and we all decamped, and set forward together. I was surprised to see, at the small village Zarow, several families as black as perfect negroes, only they were not woolly-headed, and had prominent features. I asked if they were descended from slaves, or sons of slaves? They said, No; their particular families of that and the neighbouring village Sebow, were of that colour from time immemorial; and that this did not change, though either the father or mother were of another colour.

On the 1st of December we departed from Balezat, and ascended a steep mountain, upon which stands the village Noguet, which we passed about half an hour after. On the top of the hill were a few fields of teff. Harvest was then ended, and they were treading out the teff with oxen. Having passed another very rugged mountain, we descended and encamped by the

side of a small river, called Mai Kol-quall, from a number of these trees growing about it. This place is named the Kella, or Castle, because, nearly at equal distances, the mountains on each side run for a considerable extent, straight and even, in shape like a wall, with gaps at certain distances, resembling embrasures and bastions. This rock is otherwise called * Damo, anciently the prison of the collateral heirs-male of the royal family.

The river Kol-quall rises in the mountains of Tigre, and, after a course nearly N. W., falls into the Mareb. It was at Kella we saw for the first time, the roofs of the houses made in form of cones; a sure proof that the tropical rains grow more violent as they proceed westward.

About half a mile on the hill above is the village Kaibara, wholly inhabited by Mahometan Gibbertis; that is native Abyssinians of that religion. Kella being one of these bers, or passages, we were detained there three whole days, by the extravagant demands of these farmers of the Awide, who laughed at all the importance we gave ourselves. They had reasons for our reasons, menaces for our menaces, but no civilities to answer ours. What increased the awkwardness of our situation was, they would take no money for provisions, but only merchandise by way of barter. We were, indeed, prepared for this by information; so we began to open shop by spreading a cloth upon the ground, at the sight of which, hundreds of young women poured down upon us on every

* Debra Damo is the oldest prison for this purpose mentioned in Abyssinian history. It was deserted on account of the massacre by Judith. The second is Amba Geshen, in Amhara. Ambaselé was a third. Wechne, the prison of the royal-family at this day, was first chosen by Hatse Tecla.—E.

side, from villages behind the mountains which we could not see. The country is surprisingly populous, notwithstanding the great emigration lately made with Michael. Beads and antimony are the standard in this way-faring commerce; but beads are a dangerous speculation. You lose sometimes every thing, or gain more than honestly you should do; for all depends upon fashion: and the fancies of a brown, or black beauty, there, give the *ton* as decisively as does the example of the fairest in England.

To our great disappointment, the person employed to buy our beads at Jidda had not received the last list of fashions from this country; so he had bought us a quantity beautifully flowered with red and green, and as big as a large pea; also some large oval, green, and yellow ones; whereas the *ton* now among the beauties of Tigre were small sky-coloured blue beads, about the size of small lead shot, or seed-pearls; blue bugles, and common white bugles, were then in demand, and large yellow glass, flat in the sides like the amber-beads formerly used by the better sort of the old women-peasants in England. All our beads were then rejected, by six or seven dozen of the shrillest tongues I ever heard. They decried our merchandize in such a manner, that I thought they meant to condemn it as unsaleable, to be confiscated or destroyed.

Let every man, travelling in such countries as these, remember, that there is no person, however mean, who is in his company, that does not merit attention, kindness, and complacency. Let no man in travelling exalt himself above the lowest, in a greater degree than he is able to do superior service; for many that have thought themselves safe, and been inattentive to this, have perished by the unsuspected machinations of the lowest and meanest wretch among them

Few have either made such long or such frequent journies of this kind as I; and I scarcely recollect any person so insignificant that, before the end of a moderate journey, had not it in his power to return you like for like for your charity or unkindness, be the difference of your quality and condition what it would.

Of all the men in our company, none had any stock of the true small sky-blue beads, and no one had one grain of the large yellow-glass ones, but the poor Moor, whose ass was bit by the hyæna near Lila, and whose cargo, likely to be left behind at the foot of Taranta, I had distributed among the rest of the asses of the caravan; and, leaving the wounded one for the price he would fetch, had next day bought him another at Halai, with which, since that time, he continued his journey. That fellow had felt the obligation in silence; and not one word, but good-day, and good-e'en, had passed between us since conferring the favour. Understanding now what was the matter, he called Yasine, and gave him a large package, which he imprudently opened, in which was a treasure of all the beads in fashion, all but the white and blue bugles, and these Yasine himself furnished us with afterwards.

A great shout was set up by the woman-purchasers, and a violent scramble followed. Twenty, or thirty, threw themselves upon the parcel, tearing and breaking all the strings as if they intended to plunder us. This joke did not seem to be relished by the servants. Their heard-heartedness before, in professing they would let us starve rather than give us a handful of flour for all our unfashionable beads, had quite extinguished the regard we else would have unavoidably shewn to the fair sex. A dozen of whips and sticks were laid unmercifully upon their hands and arms, till each dropped her booty. The Abyssinian men

that came with them seemed to be perfectly unconcerned at the fray, and stood laughing, without the least sign of wishing to interfere in favour of either side. I believe the restitution would not have been complete, had not Yasine, who knew the country well, fired one of the ship-blunderbusses into the air behind their backs. At hearing so unexpectedly this dreadful noise, both men and women fell flat on their faces; the women were immediately dragged off the cloth; and I do not believe there was strength left in any hand, to grasp, or carry away, a single bead. My men immediately wrapped the whole in the cloth; so, for a time, our market ended.

For my part, at the first appearance of the combat I had withdrawn myself, and sat a quiet spectator under a tree. Some of the women were really so disordered with the fright, that they made but very feeble efforts in the market afterwards. The rest besought me to transfer the market to the carpet I sat on under the tree. This I consented to; but, growing wise by misfortune, my servants now produced small quantities of every thing, and not without a very sharp contest and dispute, somewhat superior in noise to that of our fish-women. We were, however, plentifully supplied with honey, butter, flour, and pumpkins of an exceeding good taste, scarcely inferior to melons.

Our caravan being fully victualled the first and second day, our market was not opened but by private adventurers, and seemingly savoured more of gallantry than gain. There were three of them the most distinguished for beauty and for tongue, who, by their discourse, had entertained me greatly. I made each of them a present of a few beads, and asked them how many kisses they would give for each? They answered very readily, with one accord, "Poh! we don't sell kisses in this country: Who would buy

them? We will give you as many as you wish for nothing." And there was no appearance but, in that bargain, they meant to be very fair and liberal dealers.

The men seemed to have no talent for marketing; nor do they, in this country, either buy, or sell. But we were surprised to see the beaux among them come down to the tent, the second day after our arrival, with each of them a single string of thin, white bugles tied about their dirty black legs, a little above their ancle; and of this they seemed as proud as if the ornament had been gold, or jewels.

I easily saw that so much poverty, joined to so much avarice and pride, made the possessor a proper subject to be employed. One of my young favourites, who had made so frank an offer of her kindness, had brought me her brother, begging that I would take him with me to Gondar to Ras Michael, and allow him to carry one of my guns, no doubt with an intention to run off with it by the way. I told her that was a thing easily done; but I must first have a trial of his fidelity, which was this, That he would, without speaking to any body but me and her, go straight to Janni at Adowa, and carry the letter I should give him, and deliver it into his own hand; in which case I would give him a large parcel of each of these beads, more than ever she thought to possess in her life-time. She frankly agreed, that my word was more to be relied upon than either her own or her brother's; and, therefore, that the beads, once shewn to them both, were to remain a deposit in my hand. However, not to send him away wholly destitute of the power of charming, I presented him the single string of white bugles for his ancle. Janni's Greek servant gave him a letter, and he made such diligence that, on the fourth day, by eight o'clock in the morn-

ing, he came to my tent without ever having been missed at home.

At the same time came an officer from Janni, with a violent mandate, in the name of Ras Michael, declaring to the person that was the cause of our detention, That, was it not for ancient friendship, the present messenger should have carried him to Ras Michael in irons; discharging me from all awides; ordering him, as Shum of the place, to furnish me with provisions; and, in regard to the time he had caused us to lose, fixing the awides of the whole caravan at eight piasters, not the twentieth part of what he would have exacted. One reason of this severity was, that, while I was in Masuah, Janni had entertained this man at his own house; and, knowing the usual vexations the caravans met with at Kella, and the long time they were detained there at considerable expence, had obtained a promise from the Shum, in consideration of favours done him, that he should let us pass freely; and, not only so, but should shew us some little civility. This promise, now broken, was one of the articles of delinquency for which he was punished.

Cohol, large needles, goat skins, coarse scissars, razors, and steels for striking fire, are the articles of barter at Kella. An ordinary goat's skin is worth a quarter of wheat-flour. As we expected an order of deliverance, all was ready upon its arrival. The Moors, with their asses, grateful for the benefit received, began to bless the moment they joined us; hoping, on my consideration, upon our arrival at the custom-house of Adowa, they might meet with further favour.

Yasine, in the four days we had staid at Kella, had told me his whole history. It appeared he had been settled in a province of Abyssinia, near to Sennaar, called Ras el Feel; had married Abd-el-Jilleel, the

Shekh's daughter; but, growing more popular than his father-in-law, he had been persecuted by him, and obliged to leave the country. He began now to form hopes, that, if I was well-received, as he saw, in all appearance, I was to be, he might, by my interest, be appointed to his father-in-law's place; especially if there was war, as every thing seemed to indicate. Abd-el-Jileel was a coward, and incapable of making himself of personal value to any party. On the contrary, Yasine was a tried man, an excellent horseman, strong, active, and of known courage, having been twice with the late king Yasous in his invasions of Sennaar, and both times much wounded there. It was impossible to dispute his title to preferment; but I had not formed that idea of my own success that I should be able to be of any use, or asistance, to him in it. Kella is in lat. 14° 24′ 34″ North.

It was on the afternoon of the 4th that we set out from Kella; our road was between two hills covered with thick wood. On our right was a cliff, or high rock of granite, on the top of which were a few houses that seemed to hang over the cliff rather than stand upon it. A few minutes after three o'clock we passed a rivulet, and a quarter of an hour afterwards another, both which run into the Mareb. We still continued to descend, surrounded on all sides with mountains covered with high grass and brushwood, and abounding with lions. At four, we arrived at the foot of the mountain, and passed a small stream which runs there.

We had seen no villages after leaving Kella. At half past four o'clock we came to a considerable river, called Angueah, which we crossed, and pitched our tent on the farther side of it. It was about fifty feet broad, and three in depth; it was perfectly clear, and ran rapidly over a bed of white pebbles, and was

the largest river we had seen in Habbesh. In summer there is a very little plain ground near it but what is occupied by the stream; it is full of small fish, in great repute for their goodness.

This river has its name from a beautiful tree, which covers both its banks. This tree by the colour of its bark and richness of its flower, is a great ornament to the banks of the river. A variety of other flowers fill the whole level plain between the mountain and the river, and even some way up the mountain; in particular, great variety of jessamin, white, yellow, and party-coloured. The country seemed now to put on a more favourable aspect; the air was much fresher, and more pleasant, every step we advanced after leaving Dixan; and one cause was very evident; the country where we now passed was well-watered with clear running streams; whereas nearer Dixan, there were few, and all stagnant.

The 5th, we descended a small mountain for about twenty minutes, and passed the following villages; Zabangella, about a mile N. W.; at a quarter of an hour after, Moloxito, half a mile further S. E.; and Mansuetemen, three quarters of a mile E. S. E. These villages are all the property of the Abuna: who has also a duty upon all merchandise passing there; but Ras Michael had confiscated these last villages on account of a quarrel he had with the last Abuna, Af-Yagoube *.

We now first began to see the high mountains of Adowa, nothing resembling in shape those of Eu-

* Michael, it appears from the Annals, vol. v. History of Yasous, had got an Abuna of his own, whom he set up in opposition to the other. This personage allowed his master to do as he pleased with the church lands; while for a trifle, he performed all the religious service required in Tigre, which, under Michael's jurisdiction, was, indeed, not much.—E.

rope, nor indeed, any other country. Their sides were all perpendicular rocks, high like steeples, or obelisks, and broken into a thousand different forms.

At half past eight o'clock we left the deep valley, wherein runs the Mareb W. N. W.; at the distance of about nine miles above it is the mountain, or high hill, on which stands Azarai, now a collection of villages, formerly two convents built by Lalibala; though the monks tell you a story of the queen of Saba residing there, which the reader may be perfectly satisfied she never did in her life.

The Mareb is the boundary between Tigre and the Baharnagash, on this side. It runs over a bed of soil; is large, deep, and smooth; but, upon rain falling, it is more dangerous to pass than any river in Abyssinia, on account of frequent holes in its bottom. We then entered the narrow plain of Yeeha, wherein runs the small river, which either gives its name to, or takes it from it. The Yeeha rises from many sources in the mountains to the west; it is neither considerable for size nor its course, and is swallowed up in the Mareb.

The harvest was in great forwardness in this place. The wheat was cut, and a considerable share of the teff in another part; they were treading out this last-mentioned grain with oxen. The dora, and a small grain, called telba (of which they make oil), was not ripe.

At eleven o'clock we rested by the side of the mountain, whence the river falls. All the villages that had been built here bore the marks of the justice of the governor of Tigre. They had been long the most incorrigible banditti in the province. He surrounded them in one night, burnt their houses, and extirpated the inhabitants; and would never suffer any once since to settle there. At three o'clock in the afternoon we

ascended what remained of the mountain of Yeeha; came to the plain upon its top; and, at a quarter before four, passed the village of that name, leaving it to the S. E. and began the most rugged and dangerous descent we had met with since Taranta.

At half past five in the evening we pitched our tent at the foot of the hill, close by a small, but rapid and clear stream, which is called Ribieraini. This name was given it by the banditti of the villages before mentioned, because from this you see two roads; one leading from Gondar, that is, from the westward; the other from the Red Sea to the eastward. One of the gang that used to be upon the outlook from this station, as soon as any caravan came in sight, cried, "Ribieraini," which, in Tigre, signifies, they are coming this way; upon which notice, every one took his lance and shield, and stationed himself properly to fall with advantage upon the unwary merchant; and it was a current report, which his present greatness could not stifle, that, in his younger days, Ras Michael himself frequently was on these expeditions at this place. On our right was the high, steep, and rugged mountain of Samayat, which the same Michael, being in rebellion, chose for his place of strength, and was there besieged, and taken prisoner, by the late king Yasous.

The rivulet of Ribieraini is the source of the fertility of the country adjoining, as it is made to overflow every part of this plain, and furnishes a perpetual store of grass, which is the reason of the caravans chusing to stop here. Two or three harvests are also obtained by means of this river; for, provided there is water, they sow in Abyssinia in all seasons. We perceived that we were now approaching some considerable town, by the great care with which every small piece of ground, and even the steep sides of the moun-

tains, were cultivated, though they had ever so little soil.

On Wednesday, the 6th of December, at eight o'clock in the morning, we set out from Ribieraini; and, in about three hours travelling on a very pleasant road, over easy hills and through hedge-rows of jessamin, honey-suckle, and many kinds of flowering-shrubs, we arrived at Adowa, where once resided Michael Suhul, governor of Tigre. It was this day we saw, for the first time, the small, long-tailed green paroquet, from the hill of Shillodee, where, as I have already mentioned, we first came in sight of the mountains of Adowa.

CHAP. V.

Arrive at Adowa—Reception there—Visit Fremona and the ruins of Axum—Arrive at Sire.

Adowa is situated on the declivity of a hill, on the west side of a small plain surrounded everywhere by mountains. Its situation accounts for its name, which signifies pass, or passage, being placed on the flat ground immediately below Ribieraini; the pass through which every body must go in their way from Gondar to the Red Sea.

This plain is watered by three rivulets, which are never dry in the midst of summer; the Assa, which we cross just below the town, when coming from the eastward; the Mai Gogua, which runs below the hill, whereon stands the village of the same name formerly, though now it is called Fremona, from the monastery of the Jesuits built there; and the Ribierami, which, joining with the other two, falls into the river Mareb, about 22 miles below Adowa. There are fish in these three streams, but none of them remarkable for their size, quantity, or goodness. The best are those of Mai Gogna, a clear and pleasant rivulet, running very violently, and with great noise. This circumstance, and ignorance of the language, has mis-

led the reverend father Jerome, who says, that the water of Mai Gogua is called so from the noise that it makes, which, in common language, is called guggling. This is a mistake, for Mai Gogua signifies the river of owls.

There are many agreeable spots to the south-east of the convent, on the banks of this river, which are thick-shaded with wood and bushes. Adowa consists of about 300 houses, and occupies a much larger space than would be thought necessary for these to stand on, by reason that each house has an inclosure round it of hedges and trees; the last chiefly the wanzey. The number of these trees, so planted in all the towns, screen them so, that, at a distance, they appear so many woods. Adowa was not formerly the capital of Tigre, but has accidentally become so upon the accession of this governor, whose property, or paternal estate, lay in and about it. His mansion-house is not distinguished from any of the others in the town unless by its size; it is situated upon the top of the hill. The person, who is Michael's deputy, in his absence lives in it. It resembles a prison rather than a palace; for there are, in and about it, above three hundred persons in irons, some of whom have been there for twenty years, mostly with a view to extort money from them; and, what is the most unhappy, even when they have paid the sum of money which he asks, do not get their deliverance from his merciless hands; most of them are kept in cages like wild beasts, and treated every way in the same manner.

But what deservedly interested us most was, the appearance of our kind and hospitable landlord, Janni. He had sent servants to conduct us from the passage of the river, and met us himself at the outer-door of his house. I do not remember to have seen a

more respectable figure. He had his own short white hair, covered with a thin muslin turban, a thick well-shaped beard as white as snow, down to his waist. He was clothed in the Abyssinian dress, all of white cotton, only he had a red silk sash, embroidered with gold, about his waist, and sandals on his feet; his upper garment reached down to his ancles. He had a number of servants and slaves about him of both sexes; and, when I approached him, seemed disposed to receive me with marks of humility and inferiority, which mortified me much, considering the obligations I was under to him, the trouble I had given, and was unavoidably still to give him. I embraced him with great acknowledgments of kindness, and gratitude, calling him father; a title I always used in speaking either to him or of him afterwards, when I was in higher fortune, which he constantly remembered with great pleasure.

He conducted us through a court-yard planted with jessamin, to a very neat, and, at the same time, large room, furnished with a silk sofa; the floor was covered with Persian carpets and cushions. All round, flowers and green leaves were strewed upon the outer yard; and the windows and sides of the room stuck full of evergreens, in commemoration of the Christmas festival that was at hand. I stopt at the entrance of this room; my feet were both dirty and bloody; and it is not good-breeding to show or speak of your feet in Abyssinia, especially if any thing ails them, and at all times they are covered. He immediately perceived the wounds that were upon mine. But our clothes and flesh were torn to pieces at Taranta, and several other places; but he thought we had come on mules furnished us by the Naybe. For the young man I had sent to him from Kella, following the genius of his countrymen, though telling truth was just as pro-

fitable to him as lying, had chosen the latter, and seeing the horse I had got from the Baharnagash, had figured in his own imagination a multitude of others, and told Janni that there were with me horses, asses, and mules in great plenty: so that when Janni saw us passing the water, he took me for a servant, and expected, for several minutes, to see the splendid company arrive, well mounted upon horses and mules caparisoned.

He was so shocked at my saying that I had performed this terrible journey on foot, that he burst into tears, uttering a thousand reproaches against the Naybe for his hard-heartedness and ingratitude, as he had twice, as he said, hindered Michael from going in person, and sweeping the Naybe from the face of the earth. Water was immediately procured to wash our feet. And here began another contention; Janni insisted upon doing this himself; which made me run out into the yard, and declare I would not suffer it. After this, the like dispute took place among the servants. It was always a ceremony in Abyssinia, to wash the feet of those that come from Cairo, and who are understood to have been pilgrims at Jerusalem.

This was no sooner finished, than a great dinner was brought, exceedingly well-dressed. But no consideration or intreaty could prevail upon my kind landlord to sit down and partake with me. He would stand, all the time, with a clean towel in his hand, though he had plenty of servants; and afterwards dined with some visitors, who had come out of curiosity, to see a man arrived from so far. Among these was a number of priests; a part of the company which I liked least, but who did not shew any hostile appearance. It was long before I cured my kind landlord of these respectful observances, which troubled me very much; nor could he ever wholly get rid of them, his own kindness and good heart, as well as

the pointed and particular orders of the Greek patriarch, Mark, constantly suggesting the same attention.

In the afternoon, I had a visit from the governor, a very graceful man, of about sixty years of age, tall and well favoured. He had just then returned from an expedition to the Tacazze, against some villages of Ayto Tesfos *, which he had destroyed, slain 120 men, and driven off a number of cattle. He had with him about sixty musquets, to which I understood he had owed his advantage. These villages were about Tubalaque, just as you ascend the farther bank of the Tacazze. He said he doubted much if we should be allowed to pass through Wogara, unless some favourable news came from Michael; for Tesfos of Samen, who kept his government after Joas's death, and refused to acknowledge Michael, or to submit to the king, in conjunction with the people of Woggora, acted now the part of robbers, plundering all sorts of people, that carried either provisions, or any thing else, to Gondar, to distress the king and Michael's Tigre soldiers, who were then there.

The church of Mariam is on a hill S. S. W. of the town, and east of Adowa; on the other side of the river is the church, called Kedus Michael. About nine miles north, a little inclined to the east, is Bet Abba Garima, one of the most celebrated monasteries in Abyssinia. It was once a residence of one of their kings; and it is supposed that, from this circumstance ill understood, former travellers † have said the metropolis of Abyssinia was called Germe.

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* A rebel governor of Samen, of whom I shall after have occasion to speak.

† Col. p. 22. proem.

Adowa is the seat of a very valuable manufacture of coarse cotton cloth, which circulates all over Abyssinia instead of silver money; each web is sixteen peek long of 1¼ width; their value a pataka; that is, ten for the ounce of gold. The houses of Adowa are all of rough stone, cemented with mud instead of mortar. That of lime is not used but at Gondar, where it is very bad. The roofs are in the form of cones, and thatched with a reedy sort of grass, something thicker than wheat straw. The Falasha, or Jews, enjoy this profession of thatching exclusively; they begin at the bottom and finish at the top.

Excepting a few spots taken notice of as we came along from Riebieraini to Adowa, this was the only part of Tigre where there was soil sufficient to yield corn; the whole of the province besides is one entire rock. There are no timber trees in this part of Tigre, unless a daroo or two in the vallies, and wanzeys in towns about the houses.

At Adowa, and all the neighbourhood, they have three harvests annually. Their first seed-time is in July and August; it is the principal one for wheat, which they then sow in the middle of the rains. In the same season they sow tocusso, teff, and barley. From the 20th of November they reap first their barley, then their wheat, and last of all, their teff. In room of these, they sow immediately upon the same ground, without any manure, barley, which they reap in February; and then often sow teff, but more frequently a kind of vetch, or pea, called Shimbra; these are cut down before the first rains, which are in April. With all these advantages of triple harvests, which cost no fallowing, weeding, manure, or other expensive processes, the farmer in Abyssinia is always poor and miserable.

In Tigre it is a good harvest that produces nine after one; it scarcely ever is known to produce ten; or more than three after one for pease. The land, as in Egypt, is set to the highest bidder yearly; and like Egypt it receives an additional value, depending on the quantity of rain that falls, and its situation more or less favourable for leading water it. The landlord furnishes the seed under condition to receive half the produce; but, I am told, he is a very indulgent master that does not take another quarter for the risk he has run; so that the quantity that comes to the share of the husbandman is not more than sufficient to afford sustenance for his wretched family *.

The soil is white clay, mixed with sand, and has as good appearance as any I have seen. I apprehend a deficiency of the crop is not from the barrenness of the soil, but from the immense quantity of field-rats and mice that over-run the whole country, and live in the fissures of the earth. To kill these, they set fire to their straw, the only use they make of it.

The cattle roam at discretion through the mountains. The herdsmen set fire to the grass, bent, and brushwood, before the rains, and an amazing verdure immediately follows. As the mountains are very steep and broken, goats are chiefly the flocks that graze upon them.

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* At Adowa the grapes in the garden were as big as horse-beans; they were the red long kind. The white were as big as small pease; they are ripe in February. Women manage the teff with long sticks; they use no flails. The straw is neglected. The ground is let out every year; the governor takes the half of what is sown; and marks out the ground previously. In addition to this, he takes, after harvest, another quarter. It is a great harvest if nine for one.—Mr Bruce's *Journal*.

The province of Tigre is all mountainous; and it has been said, without any foundation in truth, that the Pyrenees, Alps, and Appenines, are but mole-hills compared to them. I believe, however, that one of the Pyrenees, above St John Pied de Port, is much higher than Lamalmon; and that the mountain of St Bernard, one of the Alps, is full as high as Taranta, or rather higher. It is not the extreme height of the mountains in Abyssinia that occasions surprise, but the number of them, and the extraordinary forms they present to the eye. Some of them are flat, thin, and square, in shape of a hearth-stone, or slab, that scarce would seem to have been sufficient to resist the winds. Some are like pyramids, others like obelisks or prisms, and some, the most extraordinary of all the rest, pyramids pitched upon their points, with their base uppermost, which, if it was possible, as it is not, they could have been so formed in the beginning, would be strong objections to our received ideas of gravity.

They tan hides to great perfection in Tigre, but for one purpose only. They take off the hair with the juice of two plants, the merjombey, a species of solanum, and the juice of the kol-quall; both of these are produced in abundance in the province. They are great novices, however, in dyeing; the plant called suf produces the only colour they have, which is yellow. In order to obtain a blue, to weave as a border to their cotton cloths, they unravel the blue threads of the Marowt, or blue cloth of Surat, and then weave them again with the thread which they have dyed with the suf.

It was on the 10th of January, 1770, I visited the remains of the Jesuits' convent of Fremona. It is built upon the even ridge of a very high hill, in the middle of a large plain, on the opposite side of which stands Adowa. It rises from the east to the west, and

ends in a precipice on the east; it is also very steep to the north, and slopes gently down to the plain on the south. The convent is about a mile in circumference, built substantially with stones, which are cemented with lime-mortar. It has towers in the flanks and angles; and, notwithstanding the ill usage it has suffered, the walls remain still entire, to the height of twenty-five feet. It is divided into three, by cross walls of equal height. The first division seems to have been destined for the convent, the middle for the church, and the third division is separated from this by a wall, and stands upon a precipice. It seems to me as if it was designed for a place of arms. All the walls have holes for muskets, and, even now, it is by far the most defensible place in Abyssinia. It resembles an ancient castle much more than a convent.

I can scarce conceive the reason why these reverend fathers misrepresent and misplace this intended capital of Catholic Abyssinia. Jerome Lobo calls this convent a collection of miserable villages. Others place it fifty miles, when it is but two, from Adowa to the north-east. Others say it is only five miles from the Red Sea, while it is an hundred. It is very extraordinary that these errors should occur in the situation of a place built by their own hands, and where their body long had its residence; and, what makes it more extraordinary still, it was the domicil which they first occupied, and quitted last.

The kindness, hospitality, and fatherly care of Janni never ceased a moment. He had already represented me in the most favourable light to the Iteghe, or queen-mother (whose servant he had long been), to her daughter Ozoro Esther, and Ozoro Altash; and, above all, to Michael, with whom his influence was very great, and, indeed, to every body he had any weight with; his own countrymen, Greeks, Abyssi-

nians, and Mahometans; and, as we found afterwards, he had raised their curiosity to a great pitch.

A kind of calm had spread itself universally over the country, without apparent reason, as it has been in general observed to do immediately before a storm. The minds of men had been wearied, rather than amused, by a constant series of new things, none of which had been foreseen, and which generally ended in a manner little expected. Tired of guessing, all parties seemed to agree to give it over, till the success of the campaign should afford them surer grounds to go upon. Nobody loved Michael, but nobody neglected his own safety so much as to do or say any thing against him, till he either should lose or establish his good fortune, by the gain or loss of a battle with Fasil.

This calm I resolved to take advantage of, and to set out immediately for Gondar. But the 17th of January was now at hand, on which the Abyssinians celebrate the feast of the Epiphany with extraordinary rejoicings, and as extraordinary ceremonies, if we believe what their enemies have said about their yearly repetition of baptism. This I was resolved to verify with my own eyes; and as Alvarez, chaplain to the embassy from Don Emanuel, king of Portugal, to King David III., says he was likewise present at it, the public will judge between the two eye-witnesses which is likeliest to be true, when I come to give an account of the religious rites of this people. Adowa is in lat. 14° 7′ 57″ north.

On the 17th, we set out from Adowa, resuming our journey to Gondar; and, after passing two small villages, Adega Net, and Adega Daid, the first about half a mile on our left, the second about three miles distant on our right, we encamped at sunset near a

place called Bet Hannes, in a narrow valley, at the foot of two hills, by the side of a small stream.

On the 18th, in the morning, we ascended one of these hills, through a very rough stoney road, and again came into the plain, wherein stood Axum, once the capital of Abyssinia, at least as it is supposed. For my part, I believe it to have been the magnificent metropolis of the trading people, or Troglodyte Ethiopians, called, properly, Cushites, for the reason I have already given, as the Abyssinians never built any city, nor do the ruins of any exist at this day in the whole country. But the black, or Troglodyte part of it, called, in the language of Scripture, Cush, in many places has buildings of great strength, magnitude, and expence, especially at Azab, worthy the magnificence and riches of a state, which was, from the first ages, the emporium of the Indian and African trade; whose sovereign, though a Pagan, was thought an example of reproof to the nations, and chosen as an instrument to contribute materially to the building of the first temple which man erected to the true God.

The ruins of * Axum are very extensive; but, like the cities of ancient times, consist altogether of public buildings. In one square, which I apprehend to have been the centre of the town, there are forty obelisks, none of which have any hieroglyphics upon them †.

* Axum, the ancient capital of Habbesh, appears to have been much adorned, if not founded, by the Ptolemies. The ruins are in the Egyptian style; but the want of hieroglyphics seems to indicate, that the city was built by Egyptian artists, rather than peopled by an Egyptian colony. It is one of the obscurest parts of Abyssinian history, which relates to the building and desertion of this city.—E.

† Poncet says, that these obelisks are covered with hieroglyphics; but in this he is wrong; he has mistaken the carving, I shall directly mention, for hieroglyphics.—London edit. 12mo. 1709, p. 106.

There is one larger than the rest still standing, but there are two still larger than this fallen. They are all of one piece of granite; and on the top of that which is standing there is a patera, exceedingly well carved in the Greek taste. Below, there is the door-bolt and lock, which Poncet speaks of, carved on the obelisk, as if to represent an entrance through it to some building behind. The lock and bolt are precisely the same as those used at this day in Egypt and Palestine, but were never seen, as far as I know, in Ethiopia, or at any time in use there.

I apprehend this obelisk, and the two larger that are fallen, to be the work of Ptolemy Evergetes. There is a great deal of carving upon the face of the obelisk, in a Gothic taste, something like metopes, triglyphs, and guttæ, disposed rudely, and without order, but there are no characters or figures. The face of this pyramid looks due south; has been placed with great exactness, and preserves its perpendicular position till this day. As this obelisk has been otherwise described as to its ornaments, I have given a geometrical elevation of it, servilely copied, without shading or perspective, that all kind of readers may understand it.

After passing the convent of Abba Pantaleon, called in Abyssinia Mantilles, and the small obelisk situated on a rock above, we proceed south by a road cut in a mountain of red marble, having on the left a parapet wall above five feet high, solid, and of the same materials. At equal distances there are hewn in this wall solid pedestals, upon the tops of which we see the marks where stood the colossal statues of Sirius, the Latrator Anubis, or Dog Star. One hundred and thirty-three of these pedestals, with the marks of the statues I just mentioned, are still in their places; but only two figures of the dog remained when I was there, much mutilated, but of a taste easily distin-

guished to be Egyptian. These are composed of granite; but some of them appear to have been of metal. Axum, being the capital of Siris, or Sire, from this we easily see what connection this capital of the province had with the dog-star, and consequently the absurdity of supposing that the river derived its name from a Hebrew word, shihor, signifying *black*.

There are likewise pedestals, whereon the figures of the Sphinx have been placed. Two magnificent flights of steps, several hundred feet long, all of granite, exceedingly well-fashioned, and still in their places, are the only remains of a magnificent temple. In the angle of this platform where that temple stood, is the present small church of Axum, in the place of a former one destroyed by Mahomet Gragne, in the reign of king David III.; and which was probably the remains of a temple built by Ptolemy Evergetes, if not the work of times more remote.

The church is a mean, small building, very ill kept, and full of pigeons' dung. In it are supposed to be preserved the ark of the covenant, and copy of the law, which Menilek, son of Solomon, is said, in their fabulous legends, to have stolen from his father Solomon in his return to Ethiopia, and these were reckoned, as it were, the palladia of this country. Some ancient copy of the Old Testament, I do believe, was deposited here, probably that from which the first version was made. But whatever this might be, it was destroyed, with the church itself, by Mahomet Gragne, though pretended falsely to subsist there still. This I had from the king himself.

There was another relique of great importance that happened to escape from being burnt, by having, in time, been transferred to a church in one of the islands in the lake Tzana, called Sele Quarat Rasou. It is a picture of Christ's head crowned with thorns, said to be painted by St Luke, which, upon occasions of

the utmost importance, is brought out and carried with the army, especially in a war with Mahometans and Pagans. We have just seen that it was taken, upon Yasous's defeat at Sennaar, and restored afterwards upon an embassy sent thither on purpose, no doubt for a valuable consideration.

Within the outer gate of the church, below the steps, are three small square inclosures, all of granite, with small octagon pillars in the angles, apparently Egyptian; on the top of which formerly were small images of the dog-star, probably of metal. Upon a stone, in the middle of one of these, the king sits, and is crowned, and always has been since the days of Paganism; and below it, where he naturally places his feet, is a large oblong slab like a hearth, which is not of granite, but of free-stone. The inscription, though much defaced, may safely be restored.

ΠΤΟΛΕΜΑΙΟΥ ΕΥΕΡΓΕΤΟΥ
ΒΑΣΙΛΕΩΣ

Poncet has mistaken this last word for Basilius; but he did not pretend to be a scholar, and was ignorant of the history of this country.

Axum is watered by a small stream, which flows all the year from a fountain in the narrow valley, where stand the rows of obelisks. The spring is received into a magnificent bason of 150 feet square, and thence it is carried, at pleasure, to water the neighbouring gardens, where there is little fruit, excepting pomegranates; neither are these very excellent.

The present town of Axum stands at the foot of the hill, and may have about six hundred houses. There are several manufactures of coarse cotton cloth; and here, too, the best parchment is made of goat's skins, which is the ordinary employment of the monks.

Every thing seemed later at Axum, and near it, than at Adowa; the teff was standing yet green.

On the 19th of January, by a meridian altitude of the sun, and a mean of several altitudes of stars by night, I found the latitude of Axum to be 14° 6′ 36″ north.

The reader will have observed, that I have taken great pains in correcting the geography of this country, and illustrating the accounts given us by travellers, as well ancient as modern, and reconciling them to each other. There are, however, in a very late publication, what I must suppose to be errors, at least they are absolutely unintelligible to me; whether they are to be placed to the account of Jerome Lobo the original, or to Dr Johnson the translator, or to the bookseller, is what I am not able to say. But as the book itself is ushered in by a very warm and particular recommendation of so celebrated an author as Dr Johnson, and as I have, in the course of this work, spoken very contemptibly of that Jesuit, I must, in my own vindication, make some observations upon the geography of this book, which, introduced into the world by such authority, might else bring the little we know of this part of Africa into confusion, from which its maps are as yet very far from being cleared.

Caxume* is said to mean Axum, to be a city in Africa, capital of the kingdom of Tigre Mahon in Abyssinia. Now, long ago, Mr Ludolf had shewn, from the testimony of Gregory the Abyssinian, that there was no such place in Abyssinia as Tigre Mahon, that there was, indeed, a large province called Tigre, of which Axum was the capital; and Le Grand, the first publisher of Jerome Lobo, has repeatedly said the same. And Ludolf has given a very probable

* See Johnson's translation of Jerome Lobo, p. 29.

conjecture, that the first Portuguese, ignorant of the Abyssinian language, heard the officer commanding that province called Tigre Mocuonen, which is governor of Tigre, and had mistaken the name of his office for that of his province. Be that as it will, the reader may rest assured there is no such kingdom, province, or town, in all Abyssinia.

There still remains, however, a difficulty much greater than this, and an error much more difficult to be corrected. Lobo is said to have sailed from the peninsula of India, and, being bound for Zeyla, to have embarked in a vessel going to Cáxume, or Axum, capital of Tigre, and to have arrived there safely, and been well accommodated. Now, Zeyla, he says, is a city in the kingdom of Adel, at the mouth of the Red Sea*; and Axum, being two hundred miles inland, in the middle of the kingdom of Tigre, a ship going to Axum must have passed Zeyla 300 miles, or been 300 miles to the westward of it. Zeyla is not a city, as is said, but an island. It is not in the kingdom of Adel, but in the bay of Tajoura, opposite to a kingdom of that name; but the island itself belongs to the Imam of Sana, sovereign of Arabia Felix; so that it is inexplicable, how a ship going to Zeyla should choose to land 300 miles beyond it; and still more so, how, being once arrived at Axum, they should seek a ship to carry them back again to Zeyla, 300 miles eastward, when they were then going to Gondar, not much above a hundred miles west of Axum. This seems to me absolutely impossible to explain.

Still, however, another difficulty remains; Tigre

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* See page 28. Dr Johnson knew very little of Abyssinia, and was utterly unqualified for a translator of Le Grande's work. If the notes were added by Johnson, he has made a strange mistake. It was Caxem, near Adel, not Caxume, or Axum, as said in the note, to which they were bound.—E.

is said by the Jesuits, and by M. Le Grand, their historian, to be full of mountains, so high that the Alps and Appenines were very inconsiderable in comparison. And suppose it were otherwise, there is no navigable river, indeed no river at all, that runs through Tigre into the Red Sea, and there is the desert of Samhar to pass, where there is no water at all. How is it possible a ship from the coast of Malabar should get up 200 miles from any sea, among the mountains of Tigre? I hope the publisher will compare this with any map he pleases, and correct it in his *errata*, otherwise his narrative is unintelligible, unless all this was intended to be placed to the account of miracles—Peter walked upon the water, and Lobo the Jesuit sailed upon dry land.

Dr Johnson, or his publisher, involves his reader in another strange perplexity. "Dancala is a city of Africa, in Upper Ethiopia, upon the Nile, in the tract of Nubia, of which it is the capital;" and the emperor wrote, "that the missionaries might easily enter his dominions by the way of Dancala*." It is very difficult to understand how people, in a ship from India, could enter Abyssinia by the way of Dancala, if that city is upon the Nile; because nowhere, that I know, is that river in Abyssinia within 300 miles of any sea; and still more so, how it could be in Nubia, and yet in Upper Ethiopia. Dongola is, indeed, the capital of Nubia; it is upon the Nile in 20° north latitude; but then it cannot be in Upper Ethiopia, but certainly in the Lower; and is not within a hundred miles of the Red Sea, and certainly not the way for a ship from India to get to Abyssinia, which, sailing down the Red Sea, it must have passed several hundred miles, and gone to the northward. Dongola, be-

sides, is in the heart of the great desert of Beja, and cannot, with any degree of propriety, be said to be easily accessible to any, no, not even upon camels, but impossible to shipping, as it is not within 200 miles of any sea. On the other hand, Dancali, for which it may have been mistaken, is a small kingdom on the coast of the Red Sea, reaching to the frontiers of Abyssinia; and through it the patriarch Mendes entered Abyssinia, as has been said in my history; but then Dancali is in lat. 12°; and it is not in Nubia, nor upon the Nile, nor within several hundred miles of it *.

Again, Lobo has said, (p. 30, 31.) "that a Portuguese galliot was ordered to set him ashore at Pate, whose inhabitants were man-eaters." This is a very whimsical choice of a place to land strangers in, among man-eaters. I cannot conceive what advantage could be proposed by landing men going to Abyssinia so far to the southward, among a people such as this, who certainly, by their very manners, must be at war, and unconnected with all their neighbours. And many ages have passed without this reproach having fallen upon the inhabitants of the east coast of the peninsula of Africa from any authentic testimony; and I am confident, after the few specimens just given of the topographical knowledge of this author, his present testimony will not weigh much, from whatever hand this performance may have come.

M. de Montesquieu, among all his other talents a most excellent and accurate geographer, observes, that man-eaters were first mentioned when the southern parts of the east coast of the peninsula of Africa came to be unknown. Travellers of Jerome Lobo's cast, delighting in the marvellous, placed these unsociable people beyond the promontory of Prassum, because

* It is Dancali in Le Grande's work, p. 15. E.

nobody, at that time, did pass the promontory of Prassum.

Above 1200 years, these people were unknown, till Vasco de Gama discovered their coast, and called them the civil or kind nation. By some lucky revolution in that long period, when they were left to themselves, they seem most unaccountably to have changed both their diet and their manners. The Portuguese conquered them, built towns among them, and, if they met with conspiracies and treachery, these all originated in a mixture of Moors from Spain and Portugal, Europeans that had settled among them, and not among the natives themselves. No man-eaters appeared till after the discovery of the Cape of Good Hope, when that of the New World, which followed it, made the Portuguese abandon their settlements in the old; and this coast came as unknown to them as it had been to the Romans, when they traded only to Raptum and Prassum, and made Anthropophagi of all the rest. One would be almost tempted to believe that Jerome Lobo was a man-eater himself, and had taught this custom to these savages. They had it not before his coming; they have never had it since; and it must have been with some sinister intention like this, that a stranger would voluntarily seek a nation of man-eaters. It is nonsense to say, that a traveller could propose, as Lobo did, going into a far distant country, such as Abyssinia, under so very questionable a protection as a man-eater.

I will not take up my own, or the reader's time, in going through the multitude of errors in geography to be found in this book of Lobo's; I have given the reader my opinion of the author from the original, before I saw the translation. I said it was a heap of fables, and full of ignorance and presumption; and I confess myself disappointed that it has come from so celebrated a hand as the translator, so very little

amended, if indeed it can be said to be amended at all *.

Dr Johnson, in the preface to the book, expresses himself in these words:—"The Portuguese traveller (Jerome Lobo, his original) has amused his reader with no romantic absurdities, or incredible fictions. He seems to have described things as he saw them; to have copied nature from the life; and to have consulted his senses, not his imagination. He meets with no basilisks that destroy with their eyes; and his cataracts fall from the rock, without deafening the neighbouring inhabitants."

At first reading this passage, I confess I thought it irony. As to what regards the cataract, one of the articles Dr Johnson has condescended upon as truth, I had already spoken, while composing these memoirs in Abyssinia, long before this new publication saw the light; and, upon a cool revisal of the whole that I have said, I cannot think of receding from any part of it, and therefore recommend it to the reader's perusal. What we have now only to note, is the fidelity of Jerome Lobo, so strongly vouched in the words I have just cited, in the articles of basilisks, or serpents, which Dr Johnson has chosen as one of the instances of his author's adhering to fact, contrary to the custom of other writers on such subjects.

"In crossing a desert, which was two days journey over, I was in great danger of my life; for, as I lay on the ground, I perceived myself seized with a pain which forced me to rise, and saw, about four yards from me, one of those serpents that *dart their poison*

* Some objections to the narrative of Lobo will be found in a subsequent volume of this work. The translation by Johnson is most unworthy of its pompous preface. The notes are extracted from some geographical dictionary, vulgarly called a Gazetteer.—E.

from a distance. Although I rose before he came very near me, I yet felt the effects of his poisonous breath; and, if I had lain a little longer, had certainly died, I had recourse to bezoar, a sovereign remedy against those poisons, which I always carried about me. These serpents are not long, but have a body short and thick, their bellies speckled with brown, black, and yellow. They have a wide mouth, with which they draw in a great quantity of air, and having retained it some time, eject it with such force, that they kill at four yards distance; I only escaped by being somewhat farther from him." Chap. xii. p. 124. Trans. and Original, p. 116.

Now, as this is warranted, by one of such authority as Dr Johnson, to be neither imagination nor falsehood, we must think it a new system of natural philosophy, and consider it as such; and, in the first place, I would wish to know from the author, who seems perfectly informed, what species of serpent it is that he has quoted, as darting their poison at a distance. Again, what species of serpent it is that, at the distance of twelve feet, kills a man by breathing on his back; also, what do they call that species of serpent that, drawing in the same outward air that Jerome Lobo breathed, could so far pervert its quality as to kill at the distance of four yards. Surely such a serpent, if he had no other charcteristic in the world, would be described by a naturalist as the serpent with the foul stomach.—I never saw a poisonous serpent in Abyssinia, whose belly is not white; so this one, being speckled, brown, black, and yellow, will be a direction when any such is found, and serve as a warning not to come near him, at least within the distance of four yards.

Jerome Lobo continues, "That this danger was not to be much regarded, in comparison of another his negligence brought him into. As he was picking

up a skin that lay upon the ground, he was stung by a serpent that left its sting in his finger; he picked out an extraneous substance about the bigness of a hair, which he imagined was the sting. This slight wound he took little notice of, till his arm grew inflamed all over; his blood was infected; he fell into convulsions, which were interpreted as the signs of inevitable death." Chap. xii. p. 125.

Now, with all submission to Jerome Lobo, the first serpent had brought him within a near view of death; the second did no more, for it did not kill him; how comes it that he says the first danger was nothing in comparison to the second? The first would have certainly killed him, by blowing upon his back, if he had been nearer than twelve feet. The other had nearly killed him by a sting. Death was the end of them both. I cannot see the difference between the two dangers.

The first serpent was of a new species, that kills a man at the distance of twelve feet, by breathing upon him. The second was also new, for he killed by a sting. We know of no such power that any of the serpent kind have. If Dr Johnson believes this, I will not say that it is the most improbable thing he ever gave credit to; but this I will say, that it is altogether different from what at this day is taught us by natural philosophy. We easily see, by the strain in which these stories are told, that all these fables of Lobo would have passed for miracles, had the conversion of Abyssinia followed. They were preparatory steps for receiving him as confessor, had his merit not been sufficient to have entitled him to a higher place in the kalendar. Rainy, miry, and cold countries are not the favourite habitation of serpents. Abyssinia is deluged with six months rain every year while the sun is passing over it. It only enjoys clear

weather when the sun is farthest distant from it in the southern hemisphere; the days and nights are always nearly equal. Vipers are not found in a climate like this. Accordingly, I can testify, I never saw one of the kind in the high country of Abyssinia, all the time I lived there; and Tigre, where Jerome Lobo places the scene of his adventures, by being one of the highest provinces in the country, is surely not one of the most proper.

On the 20th of January, at seven o'clock in the morning, we left Axum. Our road was at first sufficiently even, through small vallies and meadows; we began to ascend gently, but through a road exceedingly difficult in itself, by reason of the large stones standing on edge, or heaped one upon another; apparently the remains of an old large causeway, part of the magnificent works about Axum.

The last part of the journey made ample amends for the difficulties and fatigue we had suffered in the beginning. For our road, on every side, was perfumed with a variety of flowering shrubs, chiefly different species of jessamine; one, in particular, of these, called Agam (a small four-leaved flower), impregnated the whole air with the most delicious odour, and covered the small hills through which we passed, in such profusion, that we were, at times, almost overcome with its fragrance. The country all round had now the most beautiful appearance, and this was heightened by the finest of weather, and a temperature of air neither too hot nor too cold.

Not long after our losing sight of the ruins of this ancient capital of Abyssinia, we overtook three travellers driving a cow before them; they had black goat-skins upon their shoulders, and lances and shields in their hands, in other respects were but thinly cloathed; they appeared to be soldiers. The cow

did not seem to be fatted for killing, and it occurred to us all that it had been stolen. This, however, was not our business, nor was such an occurrence at all remarkable in a country so long engaged in war. We saw that our attendants attached themselves in a particular manner to the three soldiers that were driving the cow, and held a short conversation with them. Soon after, we arrived at the hithermost bank of the river, where I thought we were to pitch our tent. The drivers suddenly tript up the cow, and gave the poor animal a very rude fall upon the ground, which was but the beginning of her sufferings. One of them sat across her neck, holding down her head by the horns, the other twisted the halter about her fore-feet, while the third, who had a knife in his hand, to my very great surprise, in place of taking her by the throat, got astride upon her belly before her hindlegs, and gave her a very deep wound in the upper part of her buttock.

From the time I had seen them throw the beast upon the ground, I had rejoiced, thinking, that when three people were killing a cow, they must have agreed to sell part of her to us; and I was much disappointed upon hearing the Abyssinians say, that we were to pass the river to the other side, and not encamp where I intended. Upon my proposing they should bargain for part of the cow, my men answered what they had already learned in conversation, that they were not then to kill her, that she was not wholly theirs, and that they could not sell her. This awakened my curiosity; I let my people go forward, and staid myself, till I saw, with the utmost astonishment, two pieces, thicker and longer than our ordinary beef steaks, cut out of the higher part of the buttock of the beast. How it was done I cannot positively say, because judging the cow was to be killed from the mo-

ment I saw the knife drawn, I was not anxious to view that catastrophe, which was by no means an object of curiosity; whatever way it was done, it surely was adroitly, and the two pieces were spread upon the outside of one of their shields.

One of them still continued holding the head, while the other two were busied in curing the wound. This too was done not in an ordinary manner; the skin which had covered the flesh that was taken away was left entire, and flapped over the wound, and was fastened to the corresponding part by two or more small skewers, or pins. Whether they had put any thing under the skin, between that and the wounded flesh, I know not; but at the river side where they were, they had prepared a cataplasm of clay, with which they covered the wound; they then forced the animal to rise, and drove it on before them, to furnish them with a fuller meal when they should meet their companions in the evening *.

I could not but admire a dinner so truly soldier-like, nor did I ever see so commodious a manner of carrying provisions along the road as this was. I naturally attributed this to necessity, and the love of expedition. It was a liberty, to be sure, taken with Christianity; but what transgression is not warranted

* This story, which has been the cause of much ridicule and doubt, among persons of different descriptions, requires no other commentary than the following: Raw flesh has been eaten in the country, from time immemorial. It is esteemed best, when newly cut from the animal. The author does not say how far they were able to drive the cow, after the operation; he only adds, in a humorous manner, that they reserved her, alive or dead, for a fuller meal in the evening. These men were Abyssinian soldiers, robbers, savages of a description unknown in this part of Europe. Those who are best informed with regard to the natives, will readily believe the account in its full extent.—E.

to a soldier, when distressed by his enemy in the field? I could not as yet conceive that this was the ordinary banquet of citizens, and even of priests, throughout all this country. In the hospitable, humane house of Janni, these living feasts had never appeared. It is true we had seen raw meat, but no part of an animal torn from it with the blood. The first shocked us as uncommon, but the other as impious.

When first I mentioned this in England, as one of the singularities which prevailed in this barbarous country, I was told by my friends it was not believed. I asked the reason of this disbelief, and was answered, that people who had never been out of their own country, and others well acquainted with the manners of the world, for they had travelled as far as France, had agreed the thing was impossible, and therefore it was so. My friends counselled me further, that as these men were infallible, and had each the leading of a circle, I should by all means obliterate this from my journal, and not attempt to inculcate in the minds of my readers the belief of a thing, that men who had travelled pronounced to be impossible. They suggested to me, in the most friendly manner, how rudely a very learned and worthy traveller had been treated for daring to maintain that he had eat part of a lion, a story I have already taken notice of in my introduction. They said, that, being convinced by these connoisseurs his having eat any part of a lion was *impossible*, he had abandoned this assertion altogether, and after only mentioned it in an appendix; and this was the farthest I could possibly venture.

Far from being a convert to such prudential reasons, I must for ever profess openly, that I think them unworthy of me. To represent as truth a thing I know to be a falsehood, not to avow a truth I ought

to declare; the one is fraud, the other cowardice; I hope I am equally distant from them both; and I pledge myself never to retract the fact here advanced, that the Abyssinians do feed in common upon live flesh, and that I myself have, for several years, been partaker of that disagreeable and beastly diet. On the contrary, I have no doubt, when time shall be given to read this history to an end, there will be very few, if they have candour enough to own it, that will not be ashamed of ever having doubted.

At 11 o'clock of the 20th, we pitched our tent in a small plain, by the banks of a quick clear running stream; the spot is called Mai-Shum. There are no villages, at least that we saw, here. A peasant had made a very neat little garden on both sides of the rivulet, in which he had sown abundance of onions and garlic, and he had a species of pumpkin, which I thought was little inferior to a melon. This man guessed by our arms and our horses that we were hunters, and he brought us a present of the fruits of his garden, and begged our assistance against a number of wild boars, which carried havoc and desolation through all his labours, marks of which were, indeed, too visible everywhere. Such instances of industry are very rare in this country, and demanded encouragement. I paid him, therefore, for his greens; and sent two of my servants with him into the wood, and got on horseback myself. Mirza, my horse, indeed, as well as his master, had recruited greatly during our stay at Adowa, under the hospitable roof of our good friend Janni.

Amongst us we killed five boars, all large ones, in the space of about two hours; one of which measured six feet nine inches; and, though he ran at an amazing speed near two miles, so as to be with difficulty overtaken by the horse, and was struck through and

through with two heavy lances loaded at the end with iron, no person dared to come near him on foot, and he defended himself above half an hour, till, having no other arms left, I shot him with a horse pistol. But the misfortune was, that, after our hunting had been crowned with success, we did not dare to partake of the excellent venison we had acquired; for the Abyssinians hold pork of all kinds in the utmost detestation; and I was now become cautious, lest I should give offence, being at no great distance from the capital.

On the 21st we left Mai-Shum at seven o'clock in the morning, proceeding through an open country, part sown with teff, but mostly overgrown with wild oats and high grass. We afterwards travelled among a number of low hills, ascending and descending many of them, which occasioned more pleasure than fatigue. The jessamine continued to increase upon us, and it was the common bush of the country. Several new species appeared, with five, nine, eleven petals, and plenty of the agam with four, these being all white. We found also large bushes of yellow, and orange and yellow jessamine, besides fine trees of kummel, and the boha, both of the largest size, beautifully covered with fruit and flowers, which we never before had seen.

We now descended into a plain called Selech-lecha, the village of that name being two miles east of us. The country here has an air of gaiety and cheerfulness superior to any thing we had ever yet seen. Poncet* was right when he compared it to the most beauteous part of Provence. We crossed the plain through

* Poncet's voyage to Ethiopia, p. 99.

hedge-rows of flowering shrubs, among which the honey-suckle now made a principal figure, which is of one species only, the same known in England; but the flower is larger and perfectly white, not coloured on the out-side as our honey-suckle is. Fine trees of all sizes were everywhere interspered; and the vine, with small black grapes of very good flavour, hung in many places in festoons, joining tree to tree, as if they had been artificially twined and intended for arbours.

After having passed this plain, we again entered a close country through defiles between mountains, thick covered with wood and bushes. We pitched our tent by the water-side judiciously enough as travellers, being quite surrounded with bushes, which prevented us from being seen in any direction.

As the boha was the principal tree here, and in great beauty, being then in flower, I let the caravan pass, and alighted to make a proper choice for a drawing, when I heard a cry from my servants, "Robbers! Robbers!" I immediately got upon my mule to learn what alarm this might be; and saw, to my great surprise, part of my baggage strewed on the ground, the servants running, some leading, others on foot driving such of their mules as were unloaded before them; in a word, every thing in the greatest confusion possible. Having got to the edge of the wood, they faced about, and began to prepare their fire-arms; but as I saw the king's two servants, and the man that Janni sent with us, endeavouring all they could to pitch the tent, and my horse standing peaceably by them, I forbade our fugitives to fire, till they should receive orders from me. I now rode immediately up to the tent, and in my way was saluted from among the bushes with many stones, one of which gave me a violent blow upon the foot. At the same instant I re-

ceived another blow with a small unripe pumpkin, just upon the belly, where I was strongly defended by the coarse cotton cloth wrapped several times about me, by way of sash or girdle. As robbers fight with other arms than pumpkins, when I saw this fall at my feet I was no longer under apprehension.

Notwithstanding this disagreeable reception, I advanced towards them, crying out, We were friends, and Ras Michael's friends; and desired only to speak to them, and would give them what they wanted. A few stones were the only answer, but they did no hurt. I then gave Yasine my gun, thinking that might have given offence. The top of the tent being now up, two men came forward making great complaints; but of what I did not understand, only that they seemed to accuse us of having wronged them. In short, we found the matter was this; one of the Moors had taken a heap of straw which he was carrying to his ass, but the proprietor, at seeing this, had alarmed the village. Every body had taken lances and shields; but, not daring to approach for fear of the fire-arms, they had contented themselves with showering stones at us from their hiding-places, at a distance from among the bushes. We immediately told them, however, that though, as the king's guest, I had a title to be furnished with what was necessary, yet, if they were averse to it, I was very well content to pay for every thing they furnished, both for my men and beasts; but that they must throw no stones, otherwise we would defend ourselves.

Our tent being now pitched, and every thing in order, a treaty soon followed. They consented to sell us what we wanted, but at extravagant prices, which, however, I was content to comply with. But a man of the village, acquainted with one of the king's servants, had communicated to him, that the pretence of

the Moor's taking the straw was not really the reason of the uproar, for they made no use of it, except to burn; but that a report had been spread abroad, that an action had happened between Fasil and Ras Michael, in which the latter had been defeated, and the country, no longer in fear of the Ras, had indulged themselves in their usual excesses; and, taking us for a caravan of Mahometans with merchandize, had resolved to rob us.

Welleta Gabriel, grandson to Ras Michael, commanded this part of the province; and, being but thirteen years of age, was not with his grandfather in the army, nor was he then at home, but at Gondar. However, his mother, Ozoro Welleta Michael, was at home, and her house just on the hill above. One of the king's servants had stolen away privately, and told her what had happened. The same evening, a party was sent down to the village, who took the ringleaders and carried them away, and left us for the night. They brought us a present also of provisions, and excuses for what had happened, warning us to be upon our guard the rest of the way; but they gave us positive assurance, at the same time, that no action had happened between Fasil and Ras Michael; on the contrary, it was confidently reported, that Fasil had left Bure, and retired to Metchakel, where, probably he would repass the Nile into his own country, and stay there till the rains should oblige Michael to return to Gondar.

On the 22d, we left Selech-lecha at seven o'clock in the morning, and at eight passed a village 200 yards on our left, without seeing any body; but, advancing half a mile further, we saw a number of armed men, from sixty to eighty; and we were told they were resolved to oppose our passage, unless their comrades, taken the night before, were released. The

people that attended us on the part of Welleta Michael, as our escort, considered this as an insult, and advised me by all means to turn to the left to another village immediately under the hill, on which the house of Welleta Michael, mother to Welleta Gabriel, their governor, was situated; as there we should find sufficient assistance to force these opponents to reason. We accordingly turned to the left; and, marching through thick bushes, came to the top of the hill above the village, in sight of the governor's house, just as about twenty men of the enemy's party reached the bottom of it.

The governor's servant told us, that now was the time if they advanced to fire upon them; in which case they would instantly disperse, or else they would cut us off from the village. But I could not enter into the force of this reasoning; because, if this village was strong enough to protect us, which was the cause of our turning to the left to seek it, these twenty men, putting themselves between us and the village, took the most dangerous step for themselves possible, as they must unavoidably be destroyed; and, if the village was not strong enough to protect us, to begin with bloodshed was the way to lose our lives before a superior enemy. I therefore called to the twenty men to stop where they were, and send only one of their company; and, upon their not paying any attention, I ordered Yasine to fire a large blunderbuss over their heads, so as not to touch them. Upon the report, they all fled, and a number of people flocked to us from other villages; for my part, I believe some who had appeared against us came afterwards and joined us. We soon seemed to have a little army, and, in about half an hour, a party came from the governor's house with twenty lances and shields, and six firelocks,

and, presently after, the whole multitude dispersed. It was about ten o'clock when, under their escort, we arrived at the town of Siré, and pitched our tent in a strong situation, in a very deep gulley on the west extremity of the town.

CHAP. VI.

Journey from Sire to Addergey, and Transactions there.

The province of Sire, properly so called, reaches from Axum to the Tacazze. The town of Sire, is situated on the brink of a very steep, narrow valley, and through this the road lies, which is almost impassable. In the midst of this valley runs a brook bordered with palm-trees, some of which are grown to a considerable size, but bear no fruit; they were the first we had seen in Abyssinia.

The town of Sire is larger than that of Axum; it is in the form of a half-moon fronting the plain, but its greatest breadth is at the west end; all the houses are of clay, and thatched; the roofs are in form of cones, as, indeed, are all in Abyssinia. Sire is famous for a manufacture of coarse cotton cloths, which pass for current money through all the province of Tigre, and are valued at a drachm, the tenth part of a wakea of gold, or near the value of an imperial dollar each; their breadth is a yard and quarter. Besides these, beads, needles, cohol, and incense at times only, are considered as money. The articles depend greatly on chance, which or whether any are current for the time or not; but the latter is often not demanded; and, for the first, there are modes and fashions among these

barbarians, and all, except those of a certain colour and form, are useless. We have already spoken of the fashions, such as we have found them, at Kella, and we heard they were they same here at Sire. But these people were not of a humour to buy and sell with us. They were not perfectly satisfied that Michael was alive, and waited only a confirmation of the news of his defeat, to make their own terms with all strangers unfortunate enough to fall into their hands. On the other hand, we were in possession of superior force, and, knowing their inclinations, we treated them pretty much in the manner they would have done us.

On the 22d of January at night, I observed the passage of many stars over the meridian, and, after that, of the sun, on the 23d at noon; taking a medium of all observations, I determined the latitude of Sire to be 14° 4′ 35″ north. The same evening, I observed an immersion of the first satellite of Jupiter, by which I concluded its longitude to be 38° 0′ 15″ east of the meridian of Greenwich.

Although Sire is situated in one of the finest countries in the world, like other places it has its inconveniences. Putrid fevers, of the very worst kind, are almost constant here; and there did then actually rage a species of these, that swept away a number of people daily. I did not think the behaviour of the inhabitants of this province to me was such, as required my exposing myself to the infection for the sake of relieving them; I therefore I left the fever and them to settle accounts together, without anywise interfering.

At Sire we heard the good news, that Ras Michael, on the 10th of this month, had come up with Fasil at Fagitta, and entirely dispersed his army, after killing 10,000 men. This account, though not confirmed by

any authority, struck all the mutinous part of this province with awe; and every man returned to his duty for fear of incurring the displeasure of this severe governor, which they well knew would instantly be followed by more than an adequate portion of vengeance, especially against those that had not accompanied him to the field.

On the 24th, at seven o'clock in the morning, we struck our tent at Sire, and passed through a vast plain. All this day we could discern no mountains, as far as the eye could reach, but only some few detached hills, standing separate on the plain, covered with high grass, which they were then burning, to produce new with the first rains. The country to the north is altogether flat, and perfectly open; and, though we could not discover one village this day, yet it seemed to be well inhabited, from the many people we saw on different parts of the plain, some at harvest, and some herding their cattle. The villages were probably concealed from us on the other side of the hills.

At four o'clock, we alighted at Maisbinni, at the bottom of a high, steep, bare cliff of red marble, bordering on purple, and very hard. Behind this is the small village of Maisbinni; and, on the south, another still higher hill, whose top runs in an even ridge, like a wall. At the bottom of this cliff, where our tent was pitched, the small rivulet Maisbinni rises, which, gentle and quiet as it then was, runs very violently in winter, first north from its source, and then, winding to the south-west, it falls in several cataracts, near a hundred feet high, into a narrow valley, through which it makes its way into the Tacazze. Maisbinni, for wild and rude beauties, may compare with any place we had ever seen.

This day was the first cloudy one we had met with, or observed this year. The sun was covered for se-

veral hours, which announced our being near the large river Tacazze.

On the 25th, at seven in the morning, leaving Maisbinni, we continued in our road, shaded with trees of many different kinds. At half an hour after eight we passed the river, which at this place runs west; our road this day was through the same plain as yesterday, but broken and full of holes. At ten o'clock we rested in a large plain called Dagashaha; a hill, in form of a cone, stood single about two miles north from us; a thin straggling wood was to the S. E.; and the water, rising in spungy, boggy, and dirty ground, was very indifferent; it lay to the west of us.

Dagashaha is a bleak and disagreeable quarter; but the mountain itself, being seen far off, was of great use to us in adjusting our bearings; the rather that, taking our departure from Dagashaw, we came immediately in sight of the high mountains of Samen, where Lamalmon, one of that ridge, is by much the most conspicuous; and over this lies the passage, or high road, to Gondar. We likewise see the rugged, hilly country of Salent, adjoining to the foot of the mountains of Samen. We observed no villages this day from Maisbinni to Dagashaha; nor did we discern, in the face of the country, any signs of culture, or marks of great population. We were, indeed, upon the frontiers of two provinces, which had for many years been at war.

On the 26th, at six o'clock in the morning, we left Dagashaha. Our road was through a plain and level country, but, to appearance, desolated and uninhabited, being overgrown with high bent grass and bushes, as also destitute of water. We passed the solitary village Adega, three miles on our left, the only one we had seen. At eight o'clock we came to the brink of a prodigious valley, in the bottom of which runs the

Tacazze, next to the Nile, the largest river in Upper Abyssinia. It rises in Angot (at least its principal branch), in a plain champaign country, about 200 miles S. E. of Gondar, near a spot called Souami Midre. It has three spring heads, or sources, like the Nile; near it is the small village Gourri *.

Angot is now in possession of the Galla, whose chief, Guangoul, is the head of the western Galla, once the most formidable invader of Abyssinia. The other branch of the Tacazze rises in the frontiers of Begemder, near Dabuco; whence, running between Gouliou, Lasta, and Belessen, it joins with the Angot branch, and becomes the boundary between Tigre and the other great division of the country called Amhara. This division arises from language only, for the Tacazze passes nowhere near the province of Amhara; only all to the east of the Tacazze is, in this general way of dividing the country, called Tigre, and all to the westward, from the Tacazze to the Nile, Gojam, and the Agows, is called Amhara, because the language of that province is there spoken, and not that of Tigre or Geez. But I would have my reader on his guard against the belief, that no languages but these two are spoken in these divisions; many different dialects are spoken in little districts in both, and, in some of them, neither the language of Tigre nor that of Amhara is understood.

I have already sufficiently dwelt upon the ancient history, the names, manners, and people that inhabit the banks of this river. It was the Siris (or river of the dog-star), whilst that negro, uncivilized people, the Cushites of the island of Meroe, resided upon its banks. It was then called the Tannush Abay, or the

* It signifies cold

lesser of two rivers that swelled with the tropical rains, which was the name the peasants, or unlearned, gave it, from comparison with the Nile. It was the Tacazze in Derkin, or the dwelling of the Taka, before it joined the Nile in Beja; and it was the Astaboras of those of the ancients that took the Nile for the Siris. It is now the Atbara, giving its name to that peninsula, which it incloses on the east, as the Nile does on the west and which was formerly the island of Meroe; but it never was the Tekesel, as authors have called it, deriving the name from the Ethiopic word Taka, which undoubtedly signifies fear, terror, distress, or sadness; I mean, this was never the derivation of its name. Far from this idea, our Tacazze is one of the pleasantest rivers in the world, shaded with fine lofty trees; its banks covered with bushes, inferior in fragrance to no garden in the universe; its stream is most limpid, its water excellent, and full of good fish of great variety, as its coverts are of all sorts of game.

It must be confessed, that, during the inundation, these things wear a contrary face. It carries in its bed near one-third of all the water that falls in Abyssinia; and we saw the mark the stream had reached the preceding year, eighteen feet above the bottom of the river, which we do not know was the highest point that it arrived at. But three fathoms it certainly had rolled in its bed; and this prodigious body of water, passing furiously from a high ground in a very deep descent, tearing up rocks and large trees in its course, and forcing down their broken fragments scattered on its stream, with a noise like thunder echoed from a hundred hills; these very naturally suggest an idea, that, from these circumstances, it is very rightly called the *terrible*. But then it must be considered, that all rivers in Abyssinia at the same time equally overflow; that every stream makes these ravages upon its

banks; and that there is nothing in this that peculiarly affects the Tacazze, or should give it this special name: at least, such is my opinion; though it is with great willingness I leave every reader in possession of his own, especially in etymology *.

At half an hour past eight we began a gradual descent, at first easily enough, till we crossed the small brook called Maitemquet, or, *the water of baptism.* We then began to descend very rapidly in a narrow path, winding along the side of the mountain, all shaded with lofty timber-trees of great beauty. About three miles further we came to the edge of the stream at the principal ford of the Tacazze, which is very firm and good; the bottom consists of small pebbles, without either sand or large stones. The river here, at this time, was fully 200 yards broad, the water perfectly clear, and running very swiftly; it was about three feet deep. This was the dry season of the year, when most rivers in Abyssinia ran now no more.

In the middle of the stream we met a deserter from Ras Michael's army, with his firelock upon his shoulder, driving before him two miserable girls, about ten years old, stark naked, and almost famished to death, the part of the booty which had fallen to his share in laying waste the country of Maitsha, after the battle. We asked him of the truth of this news; but he would give us no satisfaction; sometimes he said there had been a battle, sometimes none. He apparently had some distrust, that one or other of the facts, being allowed to be true, might determine us as to some design we might have upon him and his booty. He had not, in my eyes, the air of a conqueror, but rather of a coward that had sneaked away, and stolen these two miserable wretches he had with him. I asked where

* Tacazi is a word meaning any *river*, as Tacazi Geon, the Nile, Tacazi Tegres, the Tigris; see Ludolf, Lex. Ethiop. p. 967 - 1

Michael was? If at Bure? where, upon defeat of Fasil, he naturally would be. He said, No; he was at Ibaba, the capital of Maitsha: And this gave us no light, it being the place he would go to before, while detachments of his army might be employed in burning and laying waste the country of the enemy he had determined to ruin, rather than return to it some time after a battle. At last we were obliged to leave him. I gave him some flour and tobacco, both of which he took very thankfully; but further intelligence he would not give.

The banks of the Tacazze are all covered, at the water's edge, with tamarisks; behind which grow high and straight trees, that seem to have gained additional strength from having often resisted the violence of the river. Few of these ever lose their leaves, but are either covered with fruit, flower, or foliage, the whole year; indeed, abundantly with all three during the six months fair weather. The Bohabab, indeed, called, in the Amharic language, Dooma, loses its leaf: it is the largest tree in Abyssinia; the trunk is never high; it diminishes very regularly from the top to the bottom, but not beautifully; it has the appearance of a large cannon, and puts out a multitude of strong branches, which do not fall low, or nearly horizontal, but follow a direction, making all of them smaller angles than that of 45°. The fruit is of the shape of a melon, rather longer for its thickness; within are black seeds in each of the cells, into which it is divided, and round them a white substance, very like fine sugar, which is sweet, with a small degree of very pleasant acid. I never saw it either in leaf or flower; the fruit hangs dry upon the branches when they are deprived of both. The wood of this tree is soft and spungy, and of no use. The wild bees perforate the trunk, and lodge their honey in the holes

made in it; and this honey is preferred to any other in Abyssinia.

Beautiful and pleasant, however, as this river is, like every thing created, it has its disadvantages. From the falling of the first rains in March till November, it is death to sleep in the country adjoining to it, both within and without its banks; the whole inhabitants retire and live in villages on the top of the neighbouring mountains; and these are all robbers and assassins, who descend from their habitations on the heights to lie in wait for, and plunder the travellers that pass. Notwithstanding great pains have been taken by Michael, his son, and grandson, governors of Tigre and Sire, this passage had never been so far cleared, but, every month, people are cut off.

The plenty of fish in this river occasions more than an ordinary number of crocodiles to resort hither. These are so daring and fearless, that when the river swells, so as to be passable only by people upon rafts, or skins blown up with wind, they are frequently carried off by these voracious and vigilant animals. There are also many hippopotami, which, in this country, are called Gomari. I never saw any of these in the Tacazze; but at night we heard them snort, or groan, in many parts of the river near us. There are also vast multitudes of lions and hyænas in all these thickets. We were very much disturbed by them all night. The smell of our mules and horses had drawn them in numbers about our tent; but they did us no further harm, except obliging us to watch. I found the latitude of the ford, by many observations, the night of the 26th, taking a medium of them all, to be 13° 42′ 45″ north.

The river Tacazze is, as I have already said, the boundary of the province of Sire. We now entered that of Samen, which was hostile to us, being com-

manded by Ayto Tesfos, who, since the murder of Joas, had never laid down his arms, nor acknowledged his neighbour, Michael, as Ras, nor Hannes, the king last made, as sovereign. He had remained on the top of a high rock, called the Jews Rock, about eight miles from the ford. For these reasons, as well as that it was the most agreeable spot we had ever yet seen, we left our station on the Tacazze with great regret.

On the 27th of January, a little past six in the morning, we continued some short way along the river's side, and, at forty minutes past six o'clock, came to Ingerohha, a small rivulet rising in the plain above, which, after a short course through a deep valley, joins the Tacazze. At half past seven we left the river, and began to ascend the mountains which form the south side of the valley, or banks of that river. The path is narrow, winds as much, and is as steep, as the other, but not so woody. What makes it, however, still more disagreeable, is, that every way you turn you have a perpendicular precipice into a deep valley below you. At half past eight we arrived at the top of the mountain; and, at half past nine, halted at Tabulaque, having all the way passed among ruined villages, the monuments of Michael's cruelty or justice; for it is hard to say, whether the cruelty, robberies, and violence, of the former inhabitants, did not deserve the severest chastisement.

We saw many people feeding cattle on the plain, and we again opened a market for flour and other provisions, which we procured in barter for cohol, incense, and beads. None but the young women appeared. They were of a lighter colour, taller, and, in general, more beautiful than those at Kella. Their noses seemed flatter than those of the Abyssinians we had yet seen. Perhaps the climate here was beginning

that feature, so conspicuous in the negroes in general, and particularly of those in this country called Shangalla, from whose country these people are not distant above two days journey. They seemed to be very hard in all bargains but those of one kind, in which they were most reasonable and liberal. They all agreed, that these favours ought to be given, and not sold; and that all coyness and courtship was but loss of time, which always might be employed better to the satisfaction of both. These people are less gay than those at Kella, and their conversation more rough and peremptory. They understood both the Tigre language and Amharic, although we supposed it was in compliance to us that they conversed chiefly in the former.

Our tent was pitched at the head of Ingerohha, on the north of the plain of Tabulaque. This river rises among the rocks at the bottom of a little eminence, in a small stream, which, from its source, runs very swiftly, and the water is warm. The peasants told us, that, in winter, in time of the rains, it became hot, and smoked. It was in taste, however, good; nor did we perceive any kind of mineral in it. Tabulaque, Anderassa, and Montesegla belong to the Shum of Addergey, and the viceroy of Samen, Ayto Tesfos. The large town of Hauza is about eight miles south-and-by-east of this.

On the 28th, at forty minutes past six o'clock in the morning, we continued our journey; and, at half past seven, saw the small village Motecha on the top of the mountain, half a mile south from us. At eight, we crossed the river Aira; and, at half past eight, the river Tabul, the boundary of the district of Tabulaque, thick covered with wood, and especially a sort of cane, or bamboo, solid within, called there Shemale, which is used in making shafts for

javelins, or light darts thrown from the hand, either on foot or on horseback, at hunting or in war.

We alighted on the side of Anderassa, rather a small stream, and which had now ceased running, but which gives the name to the district through which we were passing. Its water is muddy and ill-tasted, and falls into the Tacazze, as do all the rivers we had yet passed. Dagashaha bears N. N. E. from this station. A great dew fell this night; the first we had yet observed.

The 29th, at six o'clock in the morning, we continued our journey from Anderassa, through thick woods of small trees, quite overgrown and covered with wild oats, reeds, and long grass, so that it was very difficult to find a path through them. We were not without considerable apprehension, from our nearness to the Shangalla, who were but two days journey distant from us to the W. N. W. and had frequently made excursions to the wild country where we now were. Hauza was upon a mountain south from us; after travelling along the edge of a hill, with the river on our left hand, we crossed it: it is called the Bowiha, and is the largest we had lately seen.

At nine o'clock we encamped upon the small river Angari, that gives its name to a district which begins at the Bowiha where Anderassa ends. The river Angari is much smaller than the Bowiha: it rises to the westward in a plain near Montesegla; after running half a mile, it falls down a steep precipice into a valley, then turns to the N. E. and, after a course of two miles and a half farther, joins the Bowiha a little above the ford.

The small village Angari lies about two miles S. S. W. on the top of a hill. Hauza (which seems a large town formed by a collection of many villages) is six miles south, pleasantly situated among a variety of

mountains, all of different and extraordinary shapes; some are straight like columns, and some sharp in the point, and broad in the base, like pyramids and obelisks, and some like cones. All these, for the most part inaccessible, unless with pain and danger to those that know the paths, are places of refuge and safety in time of war, and are agreeably separated from each other by small plains producing grain. Some of these, however, have at the top water and small flats that can be sown, sufficient to maintain a number of men, independent of what is doing below them. Hauza signifies *delight*, or *pleasure*, and, probably, such a situation of the country has given the name to it. It is chiefly inhabited by Mahometan merchants, is the *entre-pôt* between Masuah and Gondar, and there are here people of very considerable substance.

The 30th, at seven in the morning, we left Angari, keeping along the side of the river. We then ascended a high hill covered with grass and trees, through a very difficult and steep road; which ending, we came to a small and agreeable plain, with pleasant hills on each side; this is called Montesegla. At half past seven we were in the middle of three villages of the same name, two to the right, and one on the left, about half a mile distance. At half past nine we passed a small rivulet called Daracoy, which serves as the boundary between Addergey and this small district Montesegla. At a quarter past ten, we encamped at Addergey, near a small rivulet called Mai-Lumi, the river of limes or lemons, in a plain scarce a mile square, surrounded on each side with very thick wood, in form of an amphitheatre. Above this wood, are bare, rugged, and barren mountains. Midway in the cliff is a miserable village, that seems rather to hang than to stand there, scarce a yard of level ground be-

ing before it to hinder its inhabitants from falling down the precipice. The wood is full of lemons and wild citrons, from which it acquires its name. Before the tent, to the westward, was a very deep valley, which terminated this little plain in a tremendous precipice.

The river Mai-Lumi, rising above the village, falls into the wood, and there it divides itself in two; one branch surrounds the north of the plain, the other the south, and falls down a rock on each side of the valley, where they unite, and, after having run about a quarter of a mile further, are precipitated into a cataract of 150 feet high, and run in a direction south-west into the Tacazze. The river Mai-Lumi was, at this time, but small, although it is violent in winter; beyond this valley are five hills, and on the top of each is a village. The Shum resides in the one that is in the middle. He bade us a seeming hearty welcome, but had malice in his heart against us, and only waited to know for certainty if it was a proper time to gratify his avarice. A report was spread about with great confidence, that Ras Michael had been defeated by Fasil; that Gondar had rebelled, and Woggora was all in arms; so that it was certain loss of life to attempt the passage of Lamalmon.

For our part, we conceived this story to be without foundation, and that, on the contrary, the news were true which we had heard at Sire and Adowa, *viz.* That Michaël was victorious, and Fasil beaten; and we were, therefore, resolved to abide by this, as well knowing, that, if the contrary had happened, every place between the Tacazze and Gondar was as fatal to us as any thing we were to meet with on Lamalmon could be; the change of place made no difference; the dispositions of the people towards Michael and his friends we knew to be the same throughout the kingdom, and that our only safety remained on certain and

good news coming from the army, or in the finishing our journey with expedition, before any thing had happened, or was certainly known.

The hyænas this night devoured one of the best of our mules. They are here in great plenty, and so are lions; the roaring and grumbling of the latter in the part of the wood nearest our tent, greatly disturbed our beasts, and prevented them from eating their provender. I lengthened the strings of my tent, and placed the beasts between them. The white ropes, and the tremulous motion made by the impression of the wind, frightened the lions from coming near us. I had procured from Janni two small brass bells, such as the mules carry. I had tied these to the storm-strings of the tent, where their noise, no doubt, greatly contributed to our beasts' safety from these ravenous, yet cautious animals, so that we never saw them; but the noise they made, and, perhaps, their smell, so terrified the mules, that, in the morning, they were drenched in sweat as if they had been a long journey.

The brutish hyæna was not so to be deterred. I shot one of them dead on the night of the 31st of January, and, on the 2d of February I fired at another so near, that I was confident of killing him. Whether the balls had fallen out, or that I had really missed him with the first barrel, I know not, but he gave a snarl and a kind of bark upon the first shot, advancing directly upon me as if unhurt. The second shot, however, took place, and laid him without motion on the ground. Yasing and his men killed another with a pike; and such was their determined coolness, that they stalked round about us with the familiarity of a dog, or any other domestic animal brought up with man.

But we were still more incommoded by a lesser animal, a large, black ant, little less than an inch long,

which, coming out from under the ground, demolished our carpets, which they cut all into shreds, and part of the lining of our tent likewise, and every bag or sack they could find. We had first seen them in great numbers at Angari, but here they were intolerable. Their bite causes a considerable inflammation, and the pain is greater than that which arises from the bite of a scorpion; they are called *gundan*.

On the 1st of February the Shum sent his people to value, as he said, our merchandise, that we might pay custom. Many of the Moors, in our caravan, had left us to go a near way to Hauza. We had at most five or six asses, including those belonging to Yasine. I humoured them so far as to open the cases where were the telescopes and quadrant, or, indeed, rather shewed them open, as they were not shut from the observation I had been making. They could only wonder at things they had never before seen.

On the 2d of February the Shum came himself, and a violent altercation ensued. He insisted upon Michael's defeat. I told him the contrary news were true, and begged him to beware lest it should be told to the Ras upon his return that he had propagated such a falsehood. I told him also we had advice that the Ras's servants were now waiting for us at Lamalmon, and insisted upon his suffering us to depart. On the other hand, he threatened to send us to Ayto Tesfos. I answered, "Ayto Tesfos was a friend to Ayto Aylo, under whose protection I was, and a servant to the Iteghe, and was likelier to punish him for using me ill, than to approve of it; but that I would not suffer him to send me either to Ayto Tesfos, or an inch out of the road in which I was going." He said, "That I was mad;" and held a consultation with his people for about half an hour, after which he came in again, seemingly quite another man, and said, he

would dispatch us on the morrow, which was the 3d, and would send us that evening some provisions. And, indeed, we now began to be in need, having only flour barely sufficient to make bread for one meal next day. The miserable village on the cliff had nothing to barter with us; and none from the five villages about the Shum had come near us, probably by his order. As he had softened his tone, so did I mine. I gave him a small present, and he went away repeating his promises. But all that evening passed without provision, and all next day without his coming, so we got every thing ready for our departure. Our supper did not prevent our sleeping, as all our provision was gone, and we had tasted nothing all that day since our breakfast.

The country of the Shangalla lies forty miles N.N.W. of this, or rather more westerly. All this district from the Tacazze is called, in the language of Tigre, Salent, and Talent in Amharic. This probably arises from the name being originally spelled with Tz, which has occasioned the difference, the one language omitting the first letter, the other the second.

At Addergey, the 31st day of January, at noon, I observed the meridian altitude of the sun, and, at night, the passage of seven different stars over the meridian, by a medium of all which, I found that the latitude of Addergey is 13° 24′ 56″ North. And on the morning of the 1st of February, at the same place, I observed an immersion of the second satellite of Jupiter, by which I concluded the longitude of Addergey to be 37° 57′ east of the meridian at Greenwich.

On the 4th of February, at half past nine in the morning, we left Addergey: hunger pressing upon us, we were prepared to do it earlier, and for this we had been up since five in the morning; but our loss of a mule obliged us, when we packed up our tent,

to arrange our baggage differently. While employed in making ready for our departure, which was just at the dawn of day, a hyæna, unseen by any of us, fastened upon one of Yasine's asses, and had almost pulled his tail away. I was busied at gathering the tent-pins into a sack, and had placed my musket and bayonet ready against a tree, as it is at that hour, and the close of the evening, you are always to be on guard against banditti. A boy, who was servant to Yasine, saw the hyæna first, and flew to my musket. Yasine was disjoining the poles of the tent, and, having one half of the largest in his hand, he ran to the assistance of his ass, and in that moment the musket went off, luckily charged with only one ball, which gave Yasine a flesh wound between the thumb and forefinger of his left hand. The boy instantly threw down the musket, which had terrified the hyæna and made him let go the ass; but he stood ready to fight Yasine, who, not amusing himself with the choice of weapons, gave him so rude a blow with the tent-pole upon his head, that it felled him to the ground; others, with pikes, put an end to his life.

We were then obliged to turn our cares towards the wounded. Yasine's wound was soon seen to be a trifle; besides, he was a man not easily alarmed on such occasions. But the poor ass was not so easily comforted. The stump remained, the tail hanging by a piece of it, which we were obliged to cut off. The next operation was actual cautery; but, as we had made no bread for breakfast, our fire had been early out. We, therefore, were obliged to tie the stump round with whip-cord, till we could get fire enough to heat an iron.

What sufficiently marked the voracity of these beasts, the hyænas, was, that the bodies of their dead com-

panions, which we hauled a long way from us, and left there, were almost entirely eaten by the survivors the next morning; and I then observed, for the first time, that the hyæna of this country was a different species from those I had seen in Europe, which had been brought from Asia or America.

CHAP. VII.

Journey over Lamalmon to Gondar.

It was on account of these delays that we did not leave Addergey till near ten o'clock in the forenoon of the 4th of February. We continued our journey along the side of a hill, through thick wood and high grass; then descended into a steep, narrow valley, the sides of which had been shaded with high trees, but in burning the grass, the trees were consumed likewise; and the shoots from the roots were some of them above eight feet high since the tree had thus suffered that same year. The river Angueah runs through the middle of this valley; after receiving the small streams, before mentioned, it makes its way into the Tacazze. It is a very clear, swift-running river, something less than the Bowiha.

When we had just reached the river side, we saw the Shum coming from the right hand across us. There were nine horsemen in all, and fourteen or fifteen beggarly footmen. He had a well-dressed young man going before him carrying his gun, and had only a whip in his own hand; the rest had lances in theirs; but none of the horsemen had shields. It was universally agreed, that this seemed to be a party set for us, and that he probably had others before appointed to join him, for we were sure his nine horses would

not venture to do any thing. Upon the first appearance, we had stopped on this side of the river; but Welleta Michael's men, who were to accompany us to Lamalmon, and Janni's servant, told us to cross the river, and make what speed we could, as the Shum's government ended on this side.

Our people were now all on foot, and the Moors drove the beasts before them. I got immediately upon horseback, when they were then about five hundred yards below, or scarcely so much. As soon as they observed us drive our beasts into the river, one of their horsemen came galloping up, while the others continued at a smart walk. When the horseman was within twenty yards distance of me, I called upon him to stop, and, as he valued his life, not approach nearer. On this he made no difficulty to obey, but seemed rather inclined to turn back. As I saw the baggage all laid on the ground at the foot of a small round hill, upon the gentle ascent of which my servants all stood armed, I turned about my horse, and with Yasine, who was by my side, began to cross the river. The horseman upon this again advanced; again I cried to him to stop. He then pointed behind him, and said, "The Shum!" I desired him peremptorily to stop, or I would fire; upon which he turned round, and the others joining him, they held a minute's counsel together, and came all forward to the river, where they paused a moment as if counting our number, and then began to enter the stream. Yasine now cried to them in Amharic, as I had done before in Tigre desiring them, as they valued their lives, to come no nearer. They stopt, a sign of no great resolution; and, after some altercation, it was agreed the Shum, and his son with the gun, should pass the river.

The Shum complained violently that we had left Addergey without his leave, and now were attacking

him in his own government upon the high road. "A pretty situation," said I, "was ours at Addergey, where the Shum left the king's stranger no other alternative but dying with hunger, or being eaten by the hyæna."

"This is not your government," says Janni's servant; "you know my master, Ayto Aylo, commands here."—"And who is attacking you on the road?" says the Sire servant. "Is it like peaceable people, or banditti, to come mounted on horseback, and armed as you are? Would not your mules and your foot-servants have been as proper? and would not you have been better employed, with the king and Ras Michael, fighting the Galla, as you gave your promise, than here molesting passengers on the road?"—"You lie," says the Shum, "I never promised to go with your Ras;" and on this he lifted up his whip to strike Welleta Michael's servant; but that fellow, though quiet enough, was not of the kind to be beaten. "By G—d! Shum," says he, "offer to strike me again, and I will lay you dead among your horse's feet, and my master will say I did well. Never call for your men; you should have taken the red slip off your gun before you came from home to-day to follow us. Why, if you was to shoot, you would be left alone in our hands, as all your fellows on the other side would run at the noise even of your own gun.

"Friends," said I, "you understand one another's grievances better than I do. My only business here is to get to Lamalmon as soon as possible. Now, pray, Shum, tell me what is your business with me; and why have you followed me beyond your government, which is bounded by that river?"—He said, "That I had stolen away privately without paying custom."—"I am no merchant," replied I; "I am the king's guest, and pay no custom; but as far as a piece of red

Surat cloth will content you, I will give it you, and we shall part friends."—He then answered, "That two ounces of gold were what my dues had been rated at, and he would either have that, or would follow me to Debra Toon."—"Bind him, and carry him to Debra Toon," says the Sire servant, "or I shall go and bring the Shum of Debra Toon to do it. By the head of Michael, Shum, it shall not be long before I take you out of your bed for this."

I now gave orders to my people to load the mules. At hearing this, the Shum made a signal for his company to cross; but Yasine, who was opposite to them, again ordered them to stop. "Shum," said I, "you intend to follow us, apparently with a design to do us some harm. Now we are going to Debra Toon, and you are going thither. If you choose to go with us, you may in all honour and safety; but your servants shall not be allowed to join you, nor you join them; and if they but attempt to do us harm, we will for certain revenge ourselves on you. There is a piece of ordnance," continued I, shewing him a large blunderbuss, "a cannon, that will sweep fifty such fellows as you to eternity in a moment. This shall take the care of them, and we shall take the care of you; but join you shall not till we are at Debra Toon."

The young man that carried the gun, the case of which had never been off, desired leave to speak with his father, as they now began to look upon themselves as prisoners. The conversation lasted about five minutes; and our baggage was now on the way, when the Shum said, he would make a proposal.—Since I had no merchandize, and was going to Ras Michael, he would accept of the red cloth, its value being about a crown, provided we swore to make no complaint of him at Gondar, nor speak of what had happened at Debra Toon; while he likewise would swear, after

having joined his servants, that he would not again pass that river. Peace was concluded upon these terms. I gave him a piece of red Surat cotton cloth, and added some cohol, incense, and beads for his wives. I gave to the young man, that carried the gun, two strings of bugles to adorn his legs, for which he seemed most wonderfully grateful. The Shum returned, not with a very placid countenance; his horsemen joined him in the middle of the stream, and away they went soberly together, and in silence.

Hauza was from this south-east, eight miles distant. Its mountains, of so many uncommon forms, had a very romantic appearance. At one o'clock we alighted at the foot of one the highest, called Debra Toon, about half way between the mountain and village of that name, which was on the side of the hill about a mile north-west. Still further to the north-west is a desert hilly district, called Adebarea, the country of the slaves, as being the neighbourhood of the Shangalla, the whole country between being waste an uninhabited.

The mountains of Waldubba, resembling those of Adebarea, lay north of us about four or five miles. Waldubba, which signifies the valley of the hyæna, is a territory entirely inhabited by the monks, who, for mortification's sake, have retired to this unwholesome, hot, and dangerous country, voluntarily to spend their lives in penitence, meditation, and prayer. This, too, is the only retreat of great men in disgrace or in disgust. These first shave their hair, and put on a cowl like the monks, renouncing the world for solitude, and taking vows which they resolve to keep no longer than exigencies require; after which they return to the world again, leaving their cowl and sanctity in Waldubba.

These monks are held in great veneration; are be-

lieved by many to have the gift of prophecy, and some of them to work miracles, and are very active instruments to stir up the people in time of trouble. Those that I have seen out of Waldubba in Gondar, and about Koscam, never shewed any great marks of abstinence; they ate and drank every thing without scruple, and in large quantities too. They say they live otherwise in Waldubba, and perhaps it may be so. There are women, also, whom we should call nuns, who, though not residing in Waldubba, go at times thither, and live in a familiarity with these saints, that has very little savour of spirituality; and many of these, who think the living in community with this holy fraternity has not in it perfection enough to satisfy their devotion, retire, one of each sex, a hermit and a nun, sequestering themselves for months, to eat herbs together in private upon the top of the mountains. These, on their return, are shewn as miracles of holiness—lean, enervated, and exhausted. Whether this is wholly to be laid to the charge of the herbs, is more than I will take upon me to decide, never having been at these retirements of Waldubba.

Violent fevers perpetually reign there. The inhabitants are all of the colour of a corpse; and their neighbours, the Shangalla, by constant inroads, destroy many of them, though lately they have been stopped, as they say, by the prayers of the monks. I suppose their partners, the nuns, had their share in it; as both of them are said to be equally superior in holiness and purity of living to what their predecessors formerly were. But, not to derogate from the efficaciousness of their prayers, the natural cause why the Shangalla molest them no more, is the small-pox, which has greatly reduced their strength and number, and extinguished, to a man, whole tribes of them.

The water is both scarce and bad at Debra Toon,

there being but one spring, or fountain; and it was exceedingly ill tasted. We did not intend to make this a station; but having sent a servant to Hauza to buy a mule in room of that which the hyæna had eaten, we were afraid to leave our man, who was not yet come forward, lest he should fall in with the Shum of Addergey, who might stop the mule for our arrears of custom.

The pointed mountain of Dagashaha continued still visible: I set it this day by the compass, and it bore due north-east. We had not seen any cultivated ground since we passed the Tacazze.

The 5th, at seven o'clock in the morning, we left Debra Toon, and came to the edge of a deep valley bordered with wood, the descent of which is not very steep. The Anzo, larger and more rapid than the Angueah, runs through the middle of this valley; its bed is full of large, smooth stones, and the sides composed of hard rock, and difficult to descend; the stream is equally clear and rapid with the other. We ascended the valley on the other side, through the most difficult road we had met with since that of the valley of Sire. At ten o'clock we found ourselves in the middle of three villages, two to the right, and one on the left; they are called Adamara, from Adama a mountain, on the east side of which is Tchober. At eleven o'clock we encamped at the foot of the mountain Adama, in a small piece of level ground, after passing a pleasant wood of no considerable extent. Adama, in Amharic, signifies pleasant; and nothing can be more wildly so than the view from this station.

Tchober is close at the foot of the mountain, surrounded on every side, except the north, by a deep valley, covered with wood. On the other side of this valley are the broken hills, which constitute the rug-

ged banks of the Anzo. On the point of one of these, most extravagantly shaped, is the village Shahagaanah, projecting, as it were, over the river; and, behind these, the irregular and broken mountains of Salént appear, especially those around Hauza, in forms which European mountains never wear; and still higher, above these, is the long ridge of Samen, which run along in an even stretch till they are interrupted by the high conical top of Lamalmon, reaching above the clouds, and reckoned to be the highest hill in Abyssinia, over the steepest part of which, by some fatality, the reason I do not know, the road of all caravans to Gondar must lie.

As soon as we passed the Anzo, immediately on our right is that part of Waldubba, full of deep vallies and woods, in which the monks used to hide themselves from the incursions of the Shangalla, before they found out the more convenient defence by the prayers and superior sanctity of the present saints. Above this is Adamara, where the Mahometans have considerable villages, and, by their populousness and strength, have greatly added to the safety of the monks, perhaps not altogether completed yet by the purity of their lives. Still higher than these villages is Tchober, where we now encamped.

On the left hand, after passing the Anzo, all is Shahagaanah, till you come to the river Zarima. It extends in an east and west direction, almost parallel to the mountains of Samen, and in this territory are several considerable villages; the people are much addicted to robbery, and rebellion, in which they were engaged at this time. Above Salent is Abergalé, and above that Tamben, which is one of the principal provinces in Tigre, commanded at present by Kefla Yasous, an officer of the greatest merit and reputation in the Abyssinian army.

On the 6th, at six o'clock in the morning, we left Tchober, and passed a wood on the side of the mountain. At a quarter past eight we crossed the river Zarima, a clear stream, running over a bottom of stones. It is about as large as the Anzo. On the banks of this river, and all this day, we passed under trees larger and more beautiful than any we had seen since leaving the Tacazze. After having crossed the Zarima, we entered a narrow defile between two mountains, where ran another rivulet: we continued advancing along the side of it, till the valley became so narrow as to leave no room but in the bed of the rivulet itself. It is called Mai-Agam, or the water, or brook of jessamin, and falls into the Zarima, at a small distance from the place wherein we passed it. It was dry at the mouth (the water being there absorbed and hid under the sand), but above, where the ground was firmer, there ran a brisk stream of excellent water, and it has the appearance of being both broad, deep, and rapid in winter. At ten o'clock we encamped upon its banks, which are here bordered with high trees of cummel, at this time both loaded with fruit and flowers. There are also here a variety of other curious trees and plants; in no place, indeed, had we seen more, except on the banks of the Tacazze. Mai-Agam consists of three villages; one, two miles distant, E. and by N.; one at same distance, N. N. W.; the third at one mile distance, S. E. by S.

On the 7th, at six o'clock in the morning, we began to ascend the mountain; at a quarter past seven the village Lik lay east of us. Murrass, a country full of low, but broken mountains, and deep narrow vallies, bears N. W. and Walkayt in the same direction, but farther off. At a quarter past eight, Ginghohha, distant from us about a mile S. W. It is a village situated upon a mountain that joins Lamalmon.

Two miles to the N. E. is the village Taguzait, on the mountain which we were ascending. It is called Guza by the Jesuits, who strangely say, that the Alps and Pyreneans are inconsiderable eminences to it. Yet, with all deference to this observation, Taguzait, or Guza, though really the base of Lamalmon, is not a quarter of a mile high.

Ten minutes before nine o'clock we pitched our tent on a small plain, called Dippebaha, on the top of the mountain, above a hundred yards from a spring, which scarcely was abundant enough to supply us with water, in quality as indifferent as it was scanty. The plain bore strong marks of the excessive heat of the sun, being full of cracks and chasms, and the grass burnt to powder. There are three small villages so near each other that they may be said to compose one. Near them is the church of St George, on the top of a small hill to the eastward, surrounded with large trees.

Since passing the Tacazze we had been in a very wild country, left so, for what I know, by nature, at least now lately rendered more so by being the theatre of civil war. The whole was one wilderness without inhabitants, unless at Addergey. The plain of Dippebaha had nothing of this appearance; it was full of grass, and interspersed with flowering shrubs, jessamin, and roses, several kinds of which were beautiful, but only one fragrant. The air was very fresh and pleasant; and a great number of people passing to and fro, animated the scene.

We met this day several monks and nuns of Waldubba, I should say pairs, for they were two and two together. They said they had been at the market of Dobarke on the side of Lamalmon, just above Dippebaha. Both men and women, but especially the latter, had large burdens of provisions on their shoulders,

bought that day, as they said, at Dobarke, which shewed me they did not wholly depend upon the herbs of Waldubba for their support. The women were stout and young, and did not seem, by their complexion, to have been long in the mortifications of Waldubba. I rather thought they had the appearance of healthy mountaineers, and were, in all probability, part of the provision bought for the convent; and, by the sample, one would think the monks had the first choice of the market, which is but fit, and is a custom observed likewise in Catholic countries. The men seemed very miserable, and ill clothed, but had a great air of ferocity and pride in their faces. They are distinguished only from the laity by a yellow cowl, or cap, on their head. The cloth they wear round them is likewise yellow, but in winter they wear skins dyed of the same colour.

On the 8th, at three quarters past six o'clock in the morning, we left Dippebaha, and, at seven, had two small villages on our left; one on the S. E. distant two miles, the other on the south, one mile off. They are called Wora, and so is the territory for some space on each side of them; but, beyond the valley, all is Shahagaanah to the root of Lalmalmon. At a quarter past seven, the village of Gingerohha was three miles on our right; and we were now ascending Lamalmon, through a very narrow road, or rather path, for it scarcely was two feet wide any where. It was a spiral winding up the side of the mountain, always on the very brink of a precipice. Torrents of water, which in winter carry prodigious stones down the side of this mountain, had divided this path into several places, and opened to us a view of that dreadful abyss below, which few heads can (mine at least could not) bear to look upon. We were here obliged to unload our baggage, and, by slow degrees, crawl

up the hill, carrying them little by little upon our shoulders round these chasms where the road was intersected. The mountains grew steeper, the paths narrower, and the breaches more frequent as we ascend. Scarce was our mules, though unloaded, able to scramble up, but were perpetually falling; and, to increase our difficulties, which, in such cases, seldom come single, a large number of cattle was descending, and seemed to threaten to push us all into the gulf below. After two hours of constant toil, at nine o'clock we alighted in a small plain called Kedus, or St Michael, from a church and village of that name, neither beast nor man being able to go a step further.

The plain of St Michael, where we now were, is at the foot of a steep cliff which terminates the west side of Lamalmon. It is here perpendicular like a wall. and a few trees only upon the top of the cliff. Over this precipice flow two streams of water, which never are dry, but run in all seasons. They fall into a wood at the bottom of this cliff, and preserve it in continual verdure all the year, though the plain itself below, as I have said, is all rent into chasms, and cracked by the heat of the sun. These two streams form a considerable rivulet in the plain of St Michael, and are a great relief both to men and cattle in this tedious and difficult passage over the mountain.

The air on Lamalmon is pleasant and temperate. We found here our appetite return, with a cheerfulness, lightness of spirits, and agility of body, which indicated that our nerves had again resumed their wonted tone, which they had lost in the low, poisonous, and sultry air on the coast of the Red Sea. The sun here is indeed hot, but in the morning a cool breeze never fails, which increases as the sun rises high. In the shade, it is always cool. The thermo-

meter, in the shade, in the plain of St Michael, this day, was 76°, wind N. W.

Lamalmon, as I have said, is the pass through which the road of all caravans to Gondar lies. It is here they take an account of all baggage and merchandise, which they transmit to the Negade Ras, or chief officer of the customs at Gondar, by a man whom they send to accompany the caravan. There is also a present, or awide, due to the private proprietor of the ground; and this is levied with great rigour and violence, and, for the most part, with injustice; so that this station, which, by the establishment of the customhouse, and nearness to the capital, should be in a particular manner attended to by government, is always the place where the first robberies and murders are committed in unsettled times. Though we had nothing with us which could be considered as subject to duty, we submitted every thing to the will of the robber of the place, and gave him his present. If he was not satisfied, he seemed to be so, which was all we wanted.

We had obtained leave to depart early in the morning of the 9th, but it was with great regret we were obliged to abandon our Mahometan friends into hands that seemed disposed to shew them no favour. The king was in Maitsha, or Damot, that is to say, far from Gondar, and various reports were spread abroad about the success of the campaign; and these people only waited for an unfavourable event to make a pretence for robbing our fellow travellers of every thing they had.

The persons whose right it was to levy these contributions were two, a father and son; the old man was dressed very decently, spoke little, but smoothly, and had a very good carriage. He professed a violent hatred to all Mahometans, on account of their religion,

a sentiment which seemed to promise nothing favourable to our friend Yasine and his companions: but, in the evening, the son, who seemed to be the active man, came to our tent, and brought us a quantity of bread and bouza, which his father had ordered before. He seemed to be much taken with our firearms, and was very inquisitive about them. I gave him every sort of satisfaction, and, little by little, saw I might win his heart entirely; which I very much wished to do, that I might free our companions from bondage.

The young man, it seems, was a good soldier; and, having been in several actions under Ras Michael, as a fusileer, he brought his gun, and insisted on shooting at marks. I humoured him in this: but as I used a rifle, which he did not understand, he found himself overmatched, especially by the greatness of the range; for he shot straight enough. I then shewed him the manner we shot flying, there being quails in abundance, and wild pigeons, of which I killed several on wing, which left him in the utmost astonishment. Having got on horseback, I next went through the exercise of the Arabs, with a long spear and a short javelin. This was more within his comprehension, as he had seen something like it; but he was wonderfully taken with the fierce and fiery appearance of my horse, and, at the same time, with his docility, the form of his saddle, bridle, and accoutrements. He threw at last the sandals off his feet, twisted his upper garment into his girdle, and set off at so furious a rate, that I could not help doubting whether he was in his sober understanding.

It was not long till he came back, and with him a man servant, carrying a sheep and a goat, and a woman carrying a jar of honey-wine. I had not yet quitted the horse; and when I saw what his intention

was, I put Mirza to a gallop, and, with one of the barrels of the gun, shot a pigeon, and immediately fired the other into the ground. There was nothing after this that could have surprised him, and it was repeated several times at his desire; after which he went into the tent, where he invited himself to my house at Gondar. There I was to teach him every thing he had seen. We now swore perpetual friendship; and a horn or two of hydromel being emptied, I introduced the case of our fellow-travellers, and obtained a promise that we should have leave to set out together. He would, moreover, take no awide, and said he would be favourable in his report to Gondar.

Matters were so far advanced, when a servant of Michael's arrived, sent by Petros (Janni's brother), who had obtained him from Ozoro Esther. This put an end to all our difficulties. Our young soldier also kept his word, and a mere trifle of awide was given, rather by the Moor's own desire, than from demand, and the report of our baggage, and dues thereon, were as low as could be wished. Our friend likewise sent his own servant to Gondar, with the billet to accompany the caravan. But the news brought by his servant were still better than all this. Ras Michael had actually beaten Fasil, and forced him to retire to the other side of the Nile, and was then in Maitsha, where it was thought he would remain with the army all the rainy season. This was just what I could have wished, as it brought me at once to the neighbourhood of the sources of the Nile, without the smallest shadow of fear or danger.

On the 9th of February, at seven o'clock, we took leave of the friends whom we had so newly acquired at Lamalmon, all of us equally joyful and happy at the news. We began to ascend what still remained

of the mountain, which, though steep and full of bushes, was much less difficult than that which we had passed. At a quarter past seven we arrived at the top of Lamalmon, which has, from below, the appearance of being sharp-pointed. On the contrary, we were much surprised to find there a large plain, part in pasture, but more bearing grain. It is full of springs, and seems to be the great reservoir from whence arise most of the rivers that water this part of Abyssinia. A multitude of streams issue from the very summit in all directions; the springs boil out from the earth in large quantities, capable of turning a mill. They plow, sow, and reap here at all seasons; and the husbandman must blame his own indolence, and not the soil, if he has not three harvests. We saw, in one place, people busy cutting down wheat; immediately next to it others at the plough; and the adjoining field had green corn in the ear; a little further, it was not an inch above the ground.

Lamalmon is on the N. W. part of the mountains of Samen. That of Gengerohha, with two pointed tops, joins it on the north, and ends these mountains here, and is separated from the plain of St Michael by a very deep gully. Neither Lamalmon nor Gingerohha, though higher than the mountains of Tigre, are equal in height to some of those of Samen. I take those to the S. E. to be much higher, and above all, that sharp-pointed hill Amba Gideon, the present residence of the governor of Samen, Ayto Tesfos. This is otherwise called the Jews-Rock, famous in the history of this country for the many revolts of Jews against the Abyssinian kings.

The mountain is everywhere so steep and high, that it is not enough to say against the will, but without the assistance of those above, no one from below can venture to ascend. On the top is a large plain, afford-

ing plenty of pasture, as well as room for plowing and sowing, for the maintenance of the army; and there is water, at all seasons, in great plenty, and even fish in the streams upon it; so that although the inhabitants of the mountain had been often beseiged for a considerable time together, they suffered little inconvenience from it, nor ever were taken unless by treason; except by Christopher de Gama and his Portuguese, who are said, by their own historians, to have stormed this rock, and put the Mahometan garrison to the sword. No mention of this honourable conquest is made in the annals of Abyssinia, though they give the history of this campaign of Don Christopher in the life of Claudius, or Atzenaf Segued.

On the top of the cliff where we now were, on the left hand of the road to Gondar, we filled a tube with quick-silver, and purged it perfectly of ou ward air; it stood this day at 20 English inches. Dagashaha bears N. E. by E. from our present station upon Lamalmon. The language of Lamalmon is Amharic; but there are many villages where the language of the Falasha is spoken. These are the ancient inhabitants of the mountains, who still preserve the religion, language, and manners of their ancestors, and live in villages by themselves. Their number is now considerably diminished, and this has proportionally lowered their power and spirit. They are now wholly addicted to agriculture, hewers of wood and carriers of water, and are the only potters and masons in Abyssinia. In the former profession they excel greatly, and, in general, live better than the other Abyssinians; which these, in revenge, attribute to a skill in magic, not to superior industry. Their villages are generally strongly situated out of the reach of marching armies, otherwise they would be constantly rifled.

partly from hatred, and partly from hopes of finding money.

On the 10th, at half past seven in the morning, we continued along the plain on the top of Lamalmon; it is called Lama; and a village of the same name bore about two miles east from us. At eight o'clock we passed two villages called Mocken, one W. by N. at one mile and a half, the other S. E. two miles distant. At half past eight we crossed the river Macara, a considerable stream running with a very great current, which is the boundary between Woggora and Lamalmon. At nine o'clock we encamped at some small villages called Macara, under a church named Yasous. On the 11th of February, by the meridian altitude of the sun at noon, and that of several fixed stars proper for observation, I found the latitude of Macara to be 13° 6′ 8″. The ground was everywhere burnt up; and, though the nights were very cold, we had not observed the smallest dew since our first ascending the mountain. The province of Woggora begins at Macara; it is all plain, and reckoned the granary of Gondar on this side, although the name would denote no such thing, for Woggora signifies the stoney, or rocky province.

The mountains of Lasta and Belessen bound our view to the south; the hills of Gondar on the S W.; and all Woggora lies open before us to the south, covered, as I have said before, with grain. But the wheat of Woggora is not good, owing probably to the height of that province. It makes an indifferent bread, and is much less esteemed than that of Foggora and Dembea, low, flat provinces, sheltered with hills, that lie upon the side of the lake Tzana.

On the 12th we left Macara at seven in the morning, still travelling through the plain of Woggora. At half past seven saw two villages called Erba Tensa, one of them a mile distant, the other half a mile on

the N. W. At eight o'clock we came to Woken, five villages not two hundred yards distant from one another. At a quarter past eight we saw five other villages to the S. W. called Warrar, from one to four miles distant, all between the points of east and south. The country now grows inconceivably populous; vast flocks of cattle of all kinds feed on every side, having large and beautiful horns, exceedingly wide, and bosses upon their backs like camels; their colour is mostly black.

At a quarter past eight we passed Arena, a village on our left. At nine we passed the river Girama, which runs N. N. W. and terminates the district of Lamalmon, beginning that of Giram. At ten the church of St George remained on our right, one mile from us; we crossed a river called Shimbra Zuggan, and encamped about two hundred yards from it. The valley of that name is more broken and uneven than any part we had met with since we ascended Lamalmon. The valley, called also Shimbra Zuggan, is two miles and a half N. by E. on the top of a hill surrounded with trees. Two small brooks, the one from S. S. E. the other from S. E. join here, then fall into the rivulet.

The 13th, at seven in the morning, we proceeded still along the plain; at half past seven came to Arradara; and afterwards saw above twenty other villages on our right and left, ruined and destroyed from the lowest foundation by Ras Michael in his late march to Gondar. At half past eight the church of Mariam was about a hundred yards on our left. At ten we encamped under Tamamo. The country here is full of people; the villages are mostly ruined, which, in some places, they are rebuilding. It is wholly sown with grain of different kinds, but more especially with wheat. For the production of this,

they have everywhere extirpated the wood, and now labour under a great scarcity of fuel. Since we passed Lamalmon, the only substitute for this was cows and mules dung, which they gather, make into cakes, and dry in the sun. From Addergey hither, salt is the current money, in large purchases, such as sheep or other cattle; cohol and pepper, for smaller articles, such as flour, butter, fowls, &c. At Shimbra Zuggan they first began to inquire after red Surat cotton cloth, for which they offered us thirteen bricks of salt; four peeks of this red cloth are esteemed the price of a goat. We began to find the price of provisions augment in a great proportion as we approached the capital.

This day we met several caravans going to Tigre, a certain sign of Michael's victory; also vast flocks of cattle driven from the rebellious provinces, which were to pasture on Lamalmon, and had been purchased from the army. Not only the country was now more cultivated, but the people were cleanlier, better dressed, and apparently better fed, than those in the other parts we had left behind us. Indeed, from Shimbra Zuggan hither, there was not a foot, excepting the path on which we trod, that was not sown with some grain or other.

On the 14th, at seven o'clock in the morning, we continued our journey. At ten minutes past seven, we had five villages of Tamamo three miles on our left; our road was through gentle rising hills, all pasture ground. At half past seven, the village of Woggora was three miles on our right; and at eight, the church of St George a mile on our left, with a village of the same name near it; and, ten minutes after, Angaba Mariam, a church dedicated to the virgin, so called from the small territory Angaba, which we are now entering. At fifty minutes past eight, we came to five villages called Angaba, at small distances from each

other. At nine o'clock we came to Kossogue, and entered a small district of that name. The church is on a hill surrounded with trees On our left are five villages all called Kossogue, and as it were on a line, the farthest at 3 miles distance; near ten we came to the church of Argiff, in the midst of many ruined villages. Three miles on our left hand are several others, called Appano.

After having suffered with infinite patience and perseverance, the hardships and danger of this long and painful journey, at forty minutes past ten we were gratified, at last, with the sight of Gondar, according to my computation about ten miles distant. The king's palace (at least the tower of it) is distinctly seen, but none of the other houses, which are covered by the multitude of wanzey-trees growing in the town, so that it appears one thick black wood. Behind it is Azazo, likewise covered with trees. On a hill is the large church of Tecla Haimanout, and the river below it makes it distinguishable; still further on is the great lake Tzana, which terminates our horizon.

At forty-five minutes past ten we began to ascend about two miles through a broken road, having on our right, in the valley below, the river Tchagassa; and here begins the territory of that name. At fifty-five minutes past ten, descending still the hill, we passed a large spring of water, called Bambola, together with several plantations of sugar-canes which grow here from the seed. At eleven o'clock the village Tchagassa was about half a mile distant from us on our right, on the other side of the river. It is inhabited by Mahometans, as is Waalia, another small one near it. At twelve o'clock we passed the river Tchagassa over a bridge of three arches, the middle of which is Gothic, the two lesser Roman. This bridge,

though small, is solid and well cemented, built with stone by order of Facilidas, who probably employed those of his subjects who had retained the arts of the Portuguese, but not their religion.

The Tchagassa has very steep, rocky banks: It is so deep, though narrow, that, without this bridge, it scarce would be passable. We encamped at a small distance from it, but nearer Gondar. Here again we met with trees, (small ones indeed) but the first we had seen since leaving Lamalmon, excepting the usual groves of cedars. It is the Virginia cedar, or oxy-cedros, in this country called Arz, with which their churches are constantly surrounded.

On the 15th, at ten minutes past seven, we began to ascend the mountain; and, at twenty minutes after seven, passed a village on our left. At seven and three quarters we passed Tiba and Mariam, two churches, the one on our right, the other on our left, about half a mile distant; and near them several small villages, inhabited by Falasha, masons and thatchers of houses, employed at Gondar. At half past eight we came to the village Tocutcho, and, in a quarter of an hour, passed the river of that name, and in a few minutes rested on the river Angrab, about half a mile from Gondar.

Tchagassa is the last of the many little districts, which, together, compose Woggora, generally understood to be dependent on Samen, though often, from the turbulent spirit of its chiefs, struggling for independency, as at the present time, but sure to pay for it immediately after. In fact, though large, it is too near Gondar to be suffered to continue in rebellion; and, being rich and well cultivated, it derives its support from the capital, as being the mart of its produce. It is certainly one of the most fruitful provinces in Abyssinia, but the inhabitants are miserably

poor, notwithstanding their threefold harvest. Whereas, in Egypt, beholden to this country alone for its fertility, one moderate harvest gives plenty everywhere.

Woggora is full of large ants, and prodigious swarms of rats and mice, which consume immense quantities of grain; to these plagues may be added one still greater than them all, bad government, which speedily destroys all the advantages they reap from nature, climate, and situation.

Extract from the Journal kept by L. Baiugani of the Journey from Massouah to Dixan, and of some other entries.

1769.
Nov^bre.

Venerdi, 10^di — 1 ore. Sera sortiti di Massoua, e campati in terra ferma al Nordi di Massoua à 100 passa dentro terra.

Lunedi 13^d. — 5 matt. Salpato di là e andato per
7½ matt. Dato fondo a 300 passi al W. dell' estremità di Sud del paese di Archico. Ras Gadem per E. S. E. di Archico, e E. b. S. della tenda. La pianura di Archico sarà circa 1 miglia allargandosi un poco verso il Sud.

Mercordi, 15. — 8 matt. Salpato di Archico, per Sud. in due e camino
matt. Dato fondo al luogo chiamato Labarée - - - 3

Giovedi 16. — 3 sera. Salpato di la per S. un poco all E.
4¾ Dato fondo a Shellokeeb 5

Venerdi, 17. — 5½ matt. Salpato per Sud.
6½ matt. per S. W. per S. e per S. S. W.
7½ matt. per W. per W. S. W. e per S. W.
8½ dato fondo à
2,20′, sera. Salpato per S. W. per W. S. W.
3,50′ dato fondo a Ham Hamou.
} 3 miglia per ora. 13½

Sabato 18^d. — 5½ matt. Salpato per S. W.
7½ matt. per W. S. W. per S. W. per S. S. W. in questo tempo abbiamo ritrovato aqua corrente nella strad.
9½ dato fondo. 3 miglia per ora 12

	2 sera. Salpato per Sud	
	3½ sera. Perduto la corrente, andiamo S. W. S. S. W. per W. e per S. W.	
	4½ sera. Dato fondo à Sadoon. facciamo 2½ miglia per ora è qui abbiamo ritrovato nuova corrente	5¼
Domca 19d.	6¼ matt. Salpato per S. b E.	
	8½ matt. Dato fondo à Tabò. facciamo 3 miglia per ora - -	7
	3 sera. Salpato per S. per S. b. E. per S. W.	
	4 sera. Dato fondo à Li Là. abbiamo fatto 2 miglia per ora -	2
	Somma -	48¼
Lunedi 20d.	6 matt. Salpato per S. per S. W. e per S. b. E.	
	7 matt. Abbiamo lasciato dello corso e preso N. W. cominciando à montare la montagna	
	8½ matt. per W. e per W. N. W.	
	9 matt. dato fondo à Nisst. facciamo, 2 miglia per ora - - -	7½
	2¼ sera. Salpato per W. per S. W. montando la montagna di *Taranta*, di cui l'ascesa è rapidissima.	
	5 sera. Dato fondo nella strada. Avremmo fatto ¼ miglio per ora	1¼
Martedi 21d.	6 matt. Salpato per W. S. W. per S. W.	
	8,10′ matt. Siamo giunti sulla montagna, e riposato, 1 miglio.	
	8,20′ matt. Salpato per S. W.	
	9,25′ matt. Dato fondo à un miglio di distanza dal vilagio Allaja (in the MS. perhaps Altaja). Restava per noi, S. E. poco al S. Avremo fatto 2 miglia per ora.	1
	Il thermometro a 6 ore della sera era 59 gradi.	
Mercordi 22d.	8 matt. Salpato per S. W.	

9½ matt. per W.
10¾ matt. dato fondo à * * * *
facendo 2 miglia per ora - 5½
3,10′ sera. Salpato per W.
4,25′ sera. Dato fondo à Dixan. facendo 2 migl. - - - 2¼

In tutto, miglia - 67

Di Dixan si scoprono li sequenti villagi
Seghinet N. N. W. à 3 migna di distanza
Gherghera N. poco W. à 6 miglia
Adegara N. poco W. à 1½ migl.
Dobarwa W. N. W. à 15 migl.
Agamli W. N. W. à 1 miglio.
Seravi W. S. W. à 8 migl.
Zarai S. S. W. à 4 miglia.
Latitudine di Dixan. Gradi 14° 57′ 55″.

The journal from Dixan to Adowa and from Adowa to Gondar is kept in the very same manner. The entries at Axum are these

Gennaro 1770.
18di à 8,35′ matt. Salpato per W. (from Bett anis)
11¼ Il convento Abba Mantilles à 1 miglio. sopra la montagna per N. W.
11,53′. Data fondo a Axum, e siamo restati 1 giorno a Axum. Il tempio di Axum tiene sua faccia per W. N. W. Avremo fatto 2 miglia ¼ per ora. 7. 30
Latitudine di Axum, gradi 14° 6′ 36″.
20di 7¼ matt. Salpato per W.

1770 The entry at Gondar is below.
Febraro 15di 8¼. Per S. b. W. abbiamo traversato il rio Toccuccio di nuovo, e pochi minuti doppo abbiamo passato l'altro rio L'Angreb, che resta circa ¼ miglio distante di Gonder La porta esterior del Palazzo del Ré riguarda il N N. E.
In tutto migl. 179. 30

Note in English by Mr Bruce at the close of the Journal from Masuah to Gondar, under the figures 179 miles.

N. B. I apprehend the distances or quantities travelled are much too great, and must be reduced to the rate of two geographical miles per hour, unless in ascending or descending mountains or banks of rivers, where it is still less. This will be seen from observations of longitude at Siri, Adderghey and Gondar; in all which places, and several others, observations have been made to keep the road as near as possible in its true position N. and S.

CHAP. VIII.

Reception at Gondar—Triumphal Entry of the King.—The Author's first Audience.

We were much surprised at arriving on the Angrab, that no person had come to us from Petros, Janni's brother. We found afterwards, indeed, that he had taken fright upon some menacing words from the priests, at hearing a Frank was on his way to Gondar, and that he had, soon after, set out for Ibaba, where the Ras was, to receive his directions concerning us. This was the most disagreeable accident could have happened to me. I had not a single person to whom I could address myself for any thing. My letters were for the king and Ras Michael, and could be of no use, as both were absent; and though I had others for Petros and the Greeks, they, too, were out of town.

Many Mahometans came to the Angrab to meet the caravan. They all knew of my coming perfectly, and I soon explained my situation. I had Janni's letters to Negade Ras Mahomet, the chief of the Moors at Gondar, and principal merchant in Abys-

sinia, who was absent likewise with the army. But one of his brethren, a sagacious, open-hearted man, desired me not to be discouraged; that, as I had not put off my Moorish dress, I should continue it; that a house was provided for Mahomet Gibberti, and those that were with him, and that he would put me immediately into possession of it, where I might stay, free from any intercourse with the priests, till Petros or the Ras should return to Gondar. This advice I embraced with great readiness, as there was nothing I was so much afraid of as an encounter with fanatical priests before I had obtained some protection from government, or the great people in the country. After having concerted these measures, I resigned myself to the direction of my Moorish friend, Hagi Saleh.

We moved along the Angrab, having Gondar on our right situated upon a hill, and the river on our left, proceeding down till its junction with a smaller stream, called the Kahha, that joins it at the Moorish town. This situation, near running water, is always chosen by the Mahometans on account of their frequent ablutions. The Moorish town at Gondar may consist of about 3000 houses, some of them spacious and good. I was put in possession of a very neat one, destined for Mahomet Gibberti. Flour, honey, and such-like food, Mahometans and Christians eat promiscuously, and so far I was well situated. As for flesh, although there was abundance of it, I could not touch a bit of it, being killed by Mahometans, as that communion would have been looked upon as equal to a renunciation of Christianity.

By Janni's servant, who had accompanied us from Adowa, his kind and friendly master had wrote to Ayto Aylo, of whom I have already spoken. He

was the constant patron of the Greeks, and had been so also of all the Catholics who had ventured into this country, and been forced after to leave it. Though no man professed greater veneration for the priesthood, no one privately detested more those of his own country than he did; and he always pretended that, if a proper way of going to Jerusalem could be found, he would leave his large estates, and the rank he had in Abyssinia, and, with the little money he could muster, live the remaining part of his days among the monks, of whom he had now accounted himself one, in the convent of the holy sepulchre. This perhaps was, great part of it, imagination; but, as he had talked himself into a belief that he was to end his days either at Jerusalem, which was a pretence, or at Rome, which was his inclination, he willingly took the charge of white people of all communions who had hitherto been unhappy enough to stray into Abyssinia.

It was about seven o'clock at night, on the 15th, when Hagi Saleh was much alarmed by a number of armed men at his door; and his surprise was still greater upon seeing Ayto Aylo, who, as far as I know, was never in the Moorish town before, descend from his mule, and uncover his head and shoulders, as if he had been approaching a person of the first distinction. I had been reading the prophet Enoch, which Janni had procured me at Adowa; and Wemmer's and Ludolf's dictionaries were lying upon it. Yasine was sitting by me, and was telling me what news he had picked up: he was well acquainted with Ayto Aylo, from several commissions he had received for his merchants in Arabia. A contention of civilities immediately followed. I offered to stand till Aylo was covered, and he would not sit till I was seated. This being got over, the first curiosity was, What my

books were? and he was very much astonished at seeing one of them was Abyssinian, and the European helps that I had towards understanding it. He understood Tigre and Amharic perfectly, and had a little knowledge of Arabic; that is, he understood it when spoken, for he could neither read nor write it, and spoke it very ill, being at a loss for words.

The beginning of our discourse was in Arabic, and embarrassed enough, but we had plenty of interpreters in all languages. The first bashfulness being removed on both sides, our conversation began in Tigre, now, lately since Michael had become Ras, the language most used in Gondar. Aylo was exceedingly astonished at hearing me speak the language as I did, and said after, "The Greeks are poor creatures; Peter does not speak Tigre so well as this man." Then, very frequently, to Saleh and the bystanders, "Come, come, he'll do, if he can speak; there is no fear of him, he'll make his way."

He told us that Welled Hawaryat had come from the camp ill of a fever, and that they were afraid it was the small-pox: that Janni had informed them I had saved many young people's lives at Adowa, by a new manner of treating them; and that the Iteghe desired I would come the next morning, and that he should carry me to Koscam and introduce me to her. I told him that I was ready to be directed by his good advice; that the absence of the Greeks, and Mahomet Gibberti at the same time, had very much distressed me, and especially the apprehensions of Petros. He said, smiling, That neither Petros nor himself were bad men, but that unfortunately they were great cowards, and things were not always so bad as they apprehended. What had frightened Petros, was a conversation of Abba Salama, whom they met at

Koscam, expressing his displeasure with some warmth that a Frank, meaning me, was permitted to come to Gondar. "But," says Ayto Aylo, "we shall hear to-morrow or next day. Ras Michael and Abba Salama are not friends; and if you could do any good to Welled Hawaryat his son, I shall answer for it, one word of his will stop the mouths of a hundred Abba Salamas." I will not trouble the reader with much indifferent conversation that passed. He drank capillaire and water, and sat till past midnight.

Abba Salama, of whom we shall often speak, at that time filled the post of Acab Saat, or guardian of the fire *. It is the third dignity of the church, and he is the first religious officer in the palace. He had a very large revenue, and still a greater influence. He was a man exceedingly rich, and of the worst life possible; though he had taken the vows of poverty and chastity, it was said he had at that time above seventy mistresses in Gondar. His way of seducing women was as extraordinary as the number seduced. It was not by gifts, attendance, or flattery, the usual means employed on such occasions; when he had fixed his desires upon a woman, he forced her to comply, under pain of excommunication. He was exceedingly eloquent and bold, a great favourite of the Iteghe's, till taken in to be a counsellor with Lubo and Brulhe. He had been very instrumental in the murder of Kasmati Eshte, of which he vaunted, even in the palace of the queen his sister. He was a man of a pleasing countenance, short, and of a very fair com-

* The word saat, or asaat, in Ethiopic, is ambiguous on account of pronunciation. It ought not to be translated fire, but hours, the antient office of this priest being to point out the time for divine service in the king's tent. It is now merely a title of honour, in as far as regards this personal duty.—E.

plexion; indifferent, or rather averse to wine, but a monstrous glutton, nice in what he had to eat, to a degree scarcely before known in Abyssinia; a mortal enemy to all white people, whom he classed under the name of Franks, for which the Greeks, uniting their interests at favourable times, had often very nearly overset him.

The next morning, about ten o'clock, taking Hagi Saleh and Yasine with me, and dressed in my Moorish dress, I went to Ayto Aylo, and found him with several great plates of bread, melted butter, and honey, before him, of one of which he and I ate; the rest were given to the Moors, and other people present. There was with him a priest of Koscam, and we all set out for that palace as soon as we had eaten breakfast. The rest of the company were on mules. I had mounted my own favourite horse. Aylo, before his fright at Sennaar, was one of the first horsemen in Abyssinia; he was short, of a good figure, and knew the advantage of such a make for a horseman; he had therefore a curiosity to see a tall man ride; but he was an absolute stranger to the great advantage of Moorish furniture, bridles, spurs, and stirrups, in the management of a violent, strong, high-mettled horse. It was with the utmost satisfaction, when we arrived in the plain called Aylo Meydan, that I shewed him the different paces of the horse. He cried out with fear when he saw him stand upright upon his legs, and jump forward, or aside, with all four feet off the ground.

We passed the brook of St Raphael, a suburb of Gondar, where is the house of the Abuna; and upon coming in sight of the palace of Koscam, we all uncovered our heads, and rode slowly. As Aylo was all-powerful with the Iteghe, indeed her first counsellor and friend, our admittance was easy and immediate.

We alighted, and were shewn into a low room in the palace. Ayto Aylo went immediately to the queen to inquire about Welled Hawaryat, and his audience lasted two long hours. He returned to us with these news, that Welled Hawaryat was much better, by a medicine a saint from Waldubba had given him, which consisted in some characters written with common ink upon a tin plate, which characters were washed off by a medicinal liquor, and then given him to drink. It was agreed, however, that the complaint was the small-pox, and the good the medicine had done him was, he had eat heartily of brind, or raw beef, after it, though he had not ate before since his arrival, but called perpetually for drink. Aylo said, he was to remain at Koscam till towards evening, and desired me to meet him at his own house when it turned dark, and to bring Petros with me, if he was returned.

Petros was returned when I arrived, and waited for me at Hagi Saleh's house. Although he shewed all the signs of my being welcome, yet it was easy to read in his countenance he had not succeeded according to his wish, in his interview with Michael, or that he had met something that had ruffled and frightened him anew. And, indeed, this last was the case; for going to the Ras's tent, he had seen the stuffed skin of the unfortunate Woosheka, with whom he was well acquainted, swinging upon a tree, and drying in the wind. He was so terrified, and struck with such horror at the sight, that he was in a kind of hysteric fit, cried started, laughed hideously, and seemed as if he had in part lost his senses.

I was satisfied by the state I saw him in, though he had left Ibaba three days, that, as the first sight of Woosheka's stuffed skin must have been immediately before he went to the Ras, he could not have had any distinct, or particular conversation with him on my

account; and it turned out after, that he had not spoken one word upon the subject from fear, but had gone to the tent of Negade Ras Mahomet, who carried him to Kefla Yasous; that they, too, seeing the fright he was in, and knowing the cause, had gone without him to the Ras, and told him of my arrival, and of the behaviour of Abba Salama, and my fear thereupon, and that I was then in the house of Hagi Saleh, in the Moorish town. The Ras's answer was, "Abba Salama is an ass, and they that fear him are worse. Do I command in Gondar only when I stay there? My dog is of more consequence in Gondar than Abba Salama." And then, after pausing a little, he said, "Let Yagoube stay where he is in the Moors town; Saleh will let no priests trouble him there." Negade Ras Mahomet laughed, and said, "We will answer for that;" and Petros set out immediately upon his return, haunted night and day with the ghost of his friend Woosheka, but without having seen Ras Michael.

I thought, when we went at night to Ayto Aylo, and Petros had told the story distinctly, that Aylo and he were equally afraid, for he had not, or he pretended he had not, till then heard that Woosheka had been flayed alive. Aylo, too, was well acquainted with the ufortunate person, and only said, "This is Esther, this is Esther; nobody knows her but I." Then they went on to inquire particulars, and after, they would stop one another, and desire each other to speak no more; then they cried again, and fell into the same conversation. It was impossible not to laugh at the ridiculous dialogue. "Sirs," said I, "you have told me all I want; I shall not stir from the Moors town till Ras Michael arrives; if there was any need of advice, you are neither of you capable of giving it; now I would wish you would shew me you

are capable of taking mine. You are both extremely agitated, and Peter is very tired; and will besides see the ghost of Woosheka shaking to and fro all night with the wind; neither of you eat supper, as I intend to do; and I think Peter should stay here all night, but you should not lie both of you in the same room, where Wooshcka's black skin, so strongly impressed on your mind, will not fail to keep you talking all night in place of sleeping. Boil about a quart of gruel, I will put a few drops into it; go then to bed, and this unusual operation of Michael will not have power to keep you awake."

The gruel was made, and a good large dose of laudanum put into it. I took my leave, and returned with Saleh; but, before I went to the door, Aylo told me he had forgot Welled Hawaryat was very bad, and the Ireghe, Ozoro Altash, his wife, and Ozoro Esther, desired I would come and see him to-morrow. One of his daughters, by Ozoro Altash, had been ill some time before his arrival, and she too was thought in great danger. "Look," said I, "Ayto Aylo, the small pox is a disease that will have its course; and during the long time the patient is under it, if people feed them and treat them according to their own ignorant prejudices, my seeing him, or advising him, is in vain. This morning you said a man had cured him by writing upon a tin plate; and to try if he was well, they crammed him with raw beef. I do not think the letters that he swallowed will do him any harm, neither will they do him any good; but I shall not be surprised if the raw beef kills him, and his daughter Welleta Selasse, too, before I see him to-morrow."

On the morrow Petros was really taken ill, and feverish, from a cold and fatigue, and fright. Aylo and I went to Koscam, and, for a fresh amusement to him,

I shewed him the manner in which the Arabs use their firelocks on horseback; but with this advantage of a doubled barrelled gun, which he had never before seen. I shot also several birds from the horse; all which things he would have pronounc d impossible if they had been only told him. He arrived at Koscam full of wonder, and ready to believe I was capable of doing every thing I undertook.

We were just entering into the palace-door, when we saw a large procession of monks, with the priests of Koscam at their head, a large cross and a picture carried with them, the last in a very dirty, gilt frame. Aylo turned aside when he saw these; and, going into the chamberlain's apartment, called Ayto Heikel, afterwards a great friend and companion of mine. He informed us, that three great saints from Waldubba, one of whom had neither ate nor drank for twenty years of his life, had promised him to come and cure Welled Hawaryat, by laying a picture of the Virgin Mary and the cross upon him, and, therefore, they would not wish me to be seen, or meddle in the affair. "I assure you, Ayto Aylo," said I, "I shall strictly obey you. There is no sort of reason for my meddling in this affair with such associates. If they can cure him by a miracle, I am sure it is the easiest kind of cure of any, and will not do his constitution the least harm afterwards, which is more than I will promise for medicines in general; but, remember what I say to you, it will, indeed, be a miracle, if both the father and the daughter are not dead before to-morrow night." We seemed all of us satisfied in one point, that it was better he should die, than I come to trouble by interfering.

After the procession was gone, Aylo went to the Iteghe, and, I suppose, told her all that happened since he had seen her last. I was called in, and, as

usual, prostrated myself upon the ground. She received that token of respect without offering to excuse or to decline it. Aylo then said, "This is our gracious mistress, who always gives us her assistance and protection. You may safely say before her whatever is in your heart."

Our first discourse was about Jerusalem, the Holy Sepulchre, Calvary, the City of David and the Mountain of Olives, with the situations of which she was perfectly well acquainted. She then asked me to tell her truly if I was not a Frank? "Madam," said I, "if I was a Catholic, which you mean by Frank, there could be no greater folly than my concealing this from you in the beginning, after the assurance Ayto Aylo has just now given; and, in confirmation of the truth I am now telling (she had a large bible lying on the table before her, upon which I laid my hand), I declare to you, by all those truths contained in this book, that my religion is more different from the Catholic than your's is: that there has been more blood shed between the Catholics and us, on account of the difference of religion, than ever was between you and the Catholics in this country; even at this day, when men are become wiser and cooler in many parts of the world, it would be full as safe for a Jesuit to preach in the market-place of Gondar, as for any priest of my religion to present himself as a teacher in the most civilized of Frank, or Catholic countries." "How is it then," says she, "that you don't believe in miracles?"

"I see, madam," said I, "Ayto Aylo has informed you of a few words that some time ago dropt from me. I do certainly believe the miracles of Christ and his apostles, otherwise I am no Christian; but I do not believe these miracles of latter times, wrought upon trifling occasions, like sports, and jugglers' tricks,"

"And yet," says she, "our books are full of them." "I know they are," said I, "and so are those of the Catholics: but I never can believe that a saint converted the devil, who lived, forty years after, a holy life as a monk; nor the story of another saint, who, being sick and hungry, caused a brace of patridges, ready roasted, to fly upon his plate that he might eat them." "He has been reading the Synaxar," says Ayto Aylo. "I believe so," says she, smiling; "but is there any harm in believing too much, and is not there great danger in believing too little?" "Certainly," continued I; but what I meant to say to Ayto Aylo was, that I did not believe laying a picture upon Welled Hawaryat would recover him when delirious in a fever." She answered, "There was nothing impossible with God." I made a bow of assent, wishing heartily the conversation might end there.

I returned to the Moors town, leaving Aylo with the queen. In the afternoon I heard Welletta Selasse was dead; and, at night, died her father, Welled Hawaryat. The contagion from Masuah and Adowa had spread itself all over Gondar. Ozoro Ayabdar, daughter of Ozoro Altash, was now sick, and a violent fever had fallen upon Koscam. The next morning Aylo came to me and told me, the faith in the saint, who did not eat or drink for twenty years, was perfectly abandoned since Welled Hawaryat's death: That it was the desire of the queen, and Ozoro Esther, that I should transport myself to Koscam to the Itegue's palace, where all their children and grand-children, by the different men the queen's daughters had married, were under her care. I told him, "I had some difficulty to obey them, from the positive orders I had received from Petros to stay in the Moors town with Hagi Saleh till the Ras should arrive; that Koscam was full of priests, and Abba Salama there every

day; notwithstanding which, if Petros and he so advised me, I would certainly go to any possible service to the Iteghe, or Ozoro Esther."

He desired half an hour's absence before he gave me an answer, but did not return till about three hours afterwards, and, without alighting, cried out at some distance, "Aya, come; you must go immediately." I told him, "that new and clean clothes in the Gondar fashion had been procured for me by Petros, and that I wished they might be sent to his house, where I would put them on, and then go to Koscam, with a certainty that I carried no infection with me; for I had attended a number of Moorish children, while at Hagi Saleh's house, most of whom happily went on doing well; but that there was no doubt there would be infection in my clothes." He praised me up to the skies for this precaution, and the whole was executed in the manner proposed. My hair was cut round, curled, and perfumed, in the Amharic fashion, and I was thenceforward, in all outward appearance, a perfect Abyssinian.

My first advice, when arrived at Koscam, was, that Ozoro Esther, and her son by Mariam Barea, and a son by Ras Michael, should remove from the palace, and take up their lodging in a house formerly belonging to her uncle, Basha Eusebius, and give the part of the family that were yet well a chance of escaping the disease. Her young son by Mariam Barea, however, complaining, the Iteghe would not suffer him to remove, and the resolution was taken to abide the issue all in the palace together.

Before I entered upon my charge, I desired Petros (now recovered), Aylo, Abba Christophorus, a Greek priest, who acted as a physician before I came to Gondar, and Armaxikos, priest of Koscam, and favourite of the Iteghe, to be all present. I stated to

them the disagreeable task now imposed upon me, a stranger, without acquaintance, or protection, having the language but imperfectly, and without power, or controul among them. I professed my intention of doing my utmost, although the disease was much more serious and fatal in this country than in mine, but I insisted one condition should be granted me, which was, that no directions as to regimen, or management, even of the most trifling kind, as they might think, should be suffered, without my permission and superintendence, otherwise I washed my hands of the consequence, which I told before them would be fatal. They all assented to this, and Armaxikos declared those excommunicated that broke this promise; and I saw that the more scrupulous and particular I was, the more the confidence of the ladies increased. Armaxikos promised me the assistance of his prayers, and those of the whole monks, morning and evening; and Aylo said lowly to me, "You'll have no objection to this saint; I assure you he eats and drinks heartily, as I shall shew you when once these troubles are over."

I sent the servants all to work. There were apartments enough. I opened all the doors and windows, fumigating them with incense and myrrh, in abundance, washed them with warm water and vinegar, and adhered strictly to the rules which my worthy and skilful friend, Doctor Russel, had given me at Aleppo.

The common and fatal regimen in this country, and in most parts in the east, has been to keep their patient from feeling the smallest breath of air; hot drink, a fire, and a quantity of covering are added in Abyssinia, and the doors shut so close as even to keep the room in darkness, whilst this heat is further augmented by the constant burning of candles.

Ayabdar, Ozoro Altash's remaining daughter, and the son of Mariam Barea, were both taken ill at the same time, and happily recovered. A daughter of Kasmati Boro, by a daughter of Kasmati Eshtes, died, and her mother, though she survived, was a long time ill afterwards. Ayabdar was very much marked, as was Mariam Barea's son.

At this time, Ayto Confu, son of Kasmati Netcho by Ozoro Esther, had arrived from Tcherkin, a lad of very great hopes, though not then fourteen. He came to see his mother without my knowledge or her's, and was infected likewise. Last of all, the infant child of Michael, the child of his old age, took the disease, and though the weakest of all the children, recovered best. I tell these actions for brevity's sake all together, not directly in the order they happened, to satisfy the reader about the reason of the remarkable attention and favour shewed to me afterwards, upon so short an acquaintance.

The fear and anxiety of Ozoro Esther, upon smaller occasions, was excessive, and fully in proportion in the greater that now existed; many promises of Michael's favour, of riches, greatness, and protection, followed every instance of my care and attention towards my patients. She did not eat, or sleep, herself; and the ends of her fingers were all broke out into pustules, from touching the several sick persons. Confu, the favourite of all the queen's relations, and the hope of their family, had symptoms which all feared would be fatal, as he had violent convulsions, which were looked upon as forerunners of immediate death; they ceased, however, immediately on the eruption. The attention I shewed to this young man, which was more than overpaid by the return he himself made on many occasions afterwards, was greatly owing to a prepossession in his favour, which I took upon his first

appearance. Policy, as may be imagined, as well as charity, alike influenced me in the care of my other patients; but an attachment, which providence seemed to have inspired me with for my own preservation, had the greatest share in my care for Ayto Confu.

Though it is not the place, I must not forget to tell the reader, that, the third day after I had come to Koscam, a horseman and a letter had arrived from Michael to Hagi Saleh, ordering him to carry me to Koscam, and likewise a short letter written to me by Negade Ras Mahomet in Arabic, as from Ras Michael, very civil, but containing positive orders and command, as if to a servant, that I should repair to the Iteghe's palace, and not stir from thence till future orders, upon any pretence whatever.

I cannot say but this positive, peremptory dealing, did very much shock and displease me. I shewed the letter to Petros, who approved of it much; said he was glad to see it in that stile, as it was a sign the Ras was in earnest. I shewed it to Ayto Aylo, who said not much to it either the one way or the other, only he was glad that I had gone to Koscam before it came; but he taxed Ozoro Esther with being the cause of a proceeding which might have been proper to a Greek, or slave, but was not so to a free man like me, who came recommended to their protection, and had, as yet, received no favour, or even civility. Ozoro Esther laughed heartily at all this, for the first time she had shewn any inclination to mirth; she confessed she had sent a messenger every day, sometimes two, and sometimes three, ever since Welled Hawaryat had died, and by every one of them she had pressed the Ras to enjoin me not to leave Koscam, the consequence of which was the order above mentioned; and, in the evening, there was a letter to Petros from Anthule, Janni's son-in-law, a Greek, and treasurer

to the king, pretty much to the same purpose as the first, and in no softer terms, with directions, however, to furnish me with every thing I should want, on the king's account.

One morning, Aylo, in presence of the queen, speaking to Ozoro Esther of the style of the Ras's letter to me, she confessed her own anxiety was the cause, but added, "You have often upbraided me with being, what you call, an unchristian enemy, in the advices you suppose I frequently give Michael; but now, if I am not as good a friend to Yagoube, who has saved my children, as I am a steady enemy to the Galla, who murdered my husband, say then Esther is not a Christian, and I forgive you." Many conversations of this kind passed between her and me, during the illness of Ayto Confu. I removed my bed to the outer door of Confu's chamber, to be ready whenever he should call; but his mother's anxiety kept her awake in his room all night, and propriety did not permit me to go to bed. From this frequent communication began a friendship between Ozoro Esther and me, which ever after subsisted without any interruption.

Our patients, being all likely to do well, were removed to a large house of Kasmati Eshte, which stood still within the boundaries of Koscam, while the rooms underwent another lustration and fumigation, after which they all returned; and I got, as my fee, a present of the neat and convenient house formerly belonging to Basha Eusebius, which had a separate entry, without going through the palace. Still I thought it better to obey Ras Michael's orders to the letter, and not stir out of Koscam, not even to Hagi Saleh's, or to Ayto Aylo's, though both of them frequently endeavoured to persuade me that the order had no such strict meaning. But my solitude was in no way disa-

greeable to me. I had a great deal to do. I mounted my instruments, my barometer and thermometer, telescopes, and quadrant. Again all was wonder. It occasioned me many idle hours before the curiosity of the palace was satisfied. I saw the queen once every day at her levee, sometimes in the evening, where many priests were always present. I was, for the most part, twice-a-day, morning and evening, with Ozoro Esther, where I seldom met with any.

One day, when I went early to the queen, that I might get away in time, having some other engagements about noon, just as I was taking my leave, in came Abba Salama. At first he did not know me from the change of dress; but, soon after recollecting me, he said, as it were, passing, "Are you here? I thought you was with Ras Michael." I made him no answer, but bowed, and took my leave, when he called out, with an air of authority, "Come back!" and beckoned me with his hand.

Several people entered the room at that instant, and I stood still in the same place where I was, ready to receive the Iteghe's order: She said, "Come back, and speak to Abba Salama." I then advanced a few paces forward, and said, looking to the Iteghe, "What has Abba Salama to say to me?" He began directing his discourse to the queen, "Is he a priest? Is he a priest?" The Iteghe answered very gravely, "Every good man is a priest to himself; in that sense, and no other, Yagoube is a priest."—"Will you answer a question that I will ask you?" says he to me with a very pert tone of voice. "I do not know but I may, if it is a discreet one," said I, in Tigre. "Why don't you speak Amharic?" says he to me in great haste, or seeming impatience. "Because I cannot speak it well," said I. "Why don't you, on the other hand, speak Tigre to me? It is the language

the Holy Scriptures are written in, and you, a priest, should understand it." "That is Geez," says he; "I understand it, though I don't speak it."—"Then," replied I, "Ayto Heikel," the queen's chamberlain, who stood behind me, "shall interpret for us; he understands all languages."

"Ask him, Heikel," says he, "how many natures are there in Christ." Which being repeated to me, I said, "I thought the question to be put was something relating to my country, travels, or profession, in which I possibly could instruct him; and not belonging to his, in which he should instruct me. I am a physician in the town, a horseman and soldier in the field. Physic is my study in the one, and managing my horse and arms in the other. This I was bred to; as for disputes and matters of religion, they are the province of priests and schoolmen. I profess myself much more ignorant in these than I ought to be; therefore, when I have doubts, I propose them to some holy man like you, Abba Salama (he bowed for the first time), whose profession these things are. He gives me a rule, and I implicitly follow it." "Truth! truth!" says he; "by St Michael, prince of angels, that is right; it is answered well; by St George, he is a clever fellow. They told me he was a Jesuit. Will you come to see me? Will you come to see me? You need not be afraid when you come to *me*." "I trust," said I, bowing, "I shall do no ill, in that case shall have no reason to fear." Upon this I withdrew from among the crowd, and went away, as an express then arrived from Ras Michael.

It was on the 8th or 9th of March I met him at Azazo. He was dressed in a coarse dirty cloth, wrapt about him like a blanket, and another like a table-cloth folded about his head: He was lean, old, and apparently much fatigued; sat stooping upon an ex-

cellent mule, that carried him speedily without shaking him; he had also sore eyes. As we saw the place where he was to alight, by four cross lances, and a cloth thrown over them like a temporary tent, upon an eminence, we did not speak to him till he alighted. Petros and the Greek priest, besides servants, were the only people with me; Francis * had joined us upon our meeting the Ras.

We alighted at the same time he did, and afterwards, with anxiety enough, we deputed the Greek priest, who was a friend of Michael, to tell him who I was, and that I was come to meet him. The soldiers made way, and I came up, took him by the hand, and kissed it. He looked me broad in the face for a second, repeated the ordinary salutation in Tigre, "How do you do? I hope you are well;" and pointed to a place where I was to sit down. A thousand complaints, and a thousand orders came immediately before him, from a thousand mouths, and we were nearly smothered; but he took no notice of me, nor did he ask for one of his family. In some minutes after came the king, who passed at some distance to the left of him; and Michael was then led out of the shelter of his tent to the door, where he was supported on foot till the king passed by, having first pulled off the towel that was upon his head, after which he returned to his seat in the tent again.

The king had been past about a quarter of a mile when Kefla Yasous came from him with orders to the Ras, or rather, as I believe, to receive orders from him.

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* A man much attached to Michael, and who had been preferred by him to many commands, and consequently was the only Greek that could be called a good soldier.

He brought with him a young nobleman, Ayto Engedan, who, by his dress, having his upper garment twisted in a particular manner about his waist, shewed that he was carrier of a special message from the king. The crowd by this time had shut us quite out, and made a circle round the Ras, in which we were not included. We were upon the point of going away, when Kefla Yasous, who had seen Francis, said to him, "I think Engedan has the king's commands for you; you must not depart without leave." And, soon after, we understood that the king's orders were to obtain leave from the Ras, to bring me, with Engedan, near, and in sight of him, without letting me know, or introducing me to him. In answer to this, the Ras had said, "I dont know him; will people like him think this right? Ask Petros; or why should not the king call upon him and speak to him; he has letters to him as well as to me, and he will be obliged to see him to-morrow."

Engedan went away on a gallop to join the king, and we proceeded after him, nor did we receive any other message either from the king or the Ras. We returned to Koscam, very little pleased with the reception we had met with. All the town was in a hurry and confusion; 30,000 men were encamped upon the Kahha; and the first horrid scene Michael exhibited there, was causing the eyes of twelve of the chiefs of the Galla, whom he had taken prisoners, to be pulled out, and the unfortunate sufferers turned out to the fields, to be devoured at night by the hyæna. Two of these I took under my care, who both recovered, and from them I learned many particulars of their country and manners.

The next day, which was the 10th, the army marched into the town in triumph, and the Ras at the head of the troops of Tigre. He was bareheaded; over

his shoulders, and down to his back, hung a pallium, or cloak, of black velvet, with a silver fringe. A boy, by his right stirrup, held a silver wand of about five feet and a half long, much like the staves of our great officers at court. Behind him all the soldiers, who had slain an enemy and taken the spoils from them, had their lances and firelocks ornamented with small shreds of scarlet cloth, one piece for every man he had slain.

Remarkable among all this multitude was Hagos, door-keeper of the Ras, whom we have mentioned in the war of Begemder. This man, always well-armed and well-mounted, had followed the wars of the Ras from his infancy, and had been so fortunate in this kind of single combat, that his whole lance and javelin, horse and person, were covered over with the shreds of scarlet cloth. At this last battle of Fagitta, Hagos is said to have slain eleven men with his own hand. Indeed there is nothing more fallacious than judging of a man's courage by these marks of conquest. A good horseman, armed with a coat of mail, upon a strong, well-fed, well-winded horse, may, after a defeat, kill as many of these wretched, weary, naked fugitives as he pleases, confining himself to those that are weakly, mounted upon tired horses, and covered only with goat's-skins, or that are flying on foot.

Behind came Gusho of Amhara, and Powussen, lately made governor of Begemder for his behaviour at the battle of Fagitta, where as I have said, he pursued Fasil and his army for two days. The Ras had given him also a farther reward, his grand-daughter Ayabdar, lately recovered from the small pox, and the only one of my patients that, neither by herself, her mother, nor her husband, ever made me the least return. Powussen was one of the twelve officers who,

after being delivered to Lubo by the Galla, together with Mariam Barca, had fled to Michael's tent, and were protected by him.

One thing remarkable in this cavalcade, which I observed, was the head-dress of the governors of provinces. A large broad fillet was bound upon their forehead, and tied behind their head. In the middle of this was a horn, or a conical piece of silver, gilt, about four inches long, much in the shape of our common candle extinguishers. This is called *kirn*, or horn, and is only worn in reviews or parades after victory. This, I apprehend, like all other of their usages, is taken from the Hebrews, and the several allusions made in scripture to it arise from this practice:—"I said unto fools, Deal not foolishly; and to the wicked, Lift not up the horn"—"Lift not up your horn on high; speak not with a stiff neck *"—"For promotion cometh," &c.—"But my horn shalt thou exalt like the horn of an unicorn"—"And the horn of the righteous shall be exalted with honour." And so in many other places throughout the Psalms.

Next to these came the king, with a fillet of white muslin, about three inches broad, binding his forehead, tied with a large double knot behind, and hanging down about two feet on his back. About him were the great officers of state, such of the young nobility as were without command, and, after these, the household troops.

Then followed the Kanitz Kitzera, or executioner of the camp, and his attendants; and, last of all,

* The crooked manner in which they hold their neck when this ornament is on their forehead, for fear it should fall forward, perfectly shews the meaning of speaking with a stiff neck when you hold the horn on high, or erect like the horn of the unicorn.

amidst the king's and the Ras's baggage, came a man bearing the stuffed skin of the unfortunate Woosheka upon a pole, which he hung upon a branch of the tree before the king's palace appropriated for public executions.

Upon their arrival at Gondar, all the great men had waited both upon the Ras and the King. Aylo had been with them, and Ozoro Esther was removed to Gondar; but, by my advice, had left the child at Koscam. Her son Confu, though recovered of the small-pox, had evident signs of a dysentery, and took no care of himself in point of regimen, or avoiding cold.

It was now the 13th of March, and I had heard no word from Ozoro Esther, or the Ras, though removed to a house in Gondar near to Petros. I had gone every day once to see the children at Koscam; at all which times I had been received with the greatest cordiality and marks of kindness by the Iteghe, and orders given for my free admittance upon all occasions like an officer of her household. As to the rest, I never was in appearance more neglected, than in this present moment, by all but the Moors. These were very grateful for the successful attention I had shewed their children, and very desirous to have me again among them. Hagi Saleh, in particular, could not satiate himself with cursing the ingratitude of these cafers, or infidels, the Christians. He knew what had passed at Koscam, he saw what he thought likely to happen now, and his anger was that of an honest man, and which, perhaps, many former instances which he had been witness of might have justified; but in the present one he was mistaken.

In the evening, Negade Ras Mahomet came to my house; he said Mahomet Giberti was arrived, had been twice on private business with the Ras, but had

not yet delivered him his presents; and he had not informed me of this, as he thought I was still at Koscam, and that Saleh his brother knew nothing of it, as he had not seen him since he came home. He also informed me that Ayto Aylo was with the Ras twice, the day after he entered Gondar, and once with Mahomet Gibberti: all this was about me; and that, at Ayto Aylo's proposal, it was agreed that I should be appointed Palambaras, which is master of the king's horse. It is a very great office, both for rank and revenue, but has no business attending it; the young Armenian had before enjoyed it. I told Mahomet, that, far from being any kindness to me, this would make me the most unhappy of all creatures; that my extreme desire was to see the country, and its different natural productions; to converse with the people as a stranger, but to be nobody's master nor servant; to see their books; and, above all, to visit the sources of the Nile; to live as privately in my own house, and have as much time to myself, as possible; and what I was most anxious about at present, was to know when it would be convenient for them to admit me to see the Ras, and deliver my letters as a stranger.

Mahomet went away, and returned bringing Mahomet Gibberti, who told me, that, besides the letter I carried to Ras Michael from Metical Aga, his master, he had been charged with a particular one, out of the ordinary form, dictated by the English at Jidda, who, all of them, and particularly my friends Captain Thornhill, and Captain Thomas Price of the Lion, had agreed to make a point with Metical Aga, devoted to them for his own profit, that his utmost exertion of friendship and interest, should be so employed in my recommendation as to engage the attention of Ras Michael to provide in earnest for my safety and satisfaction in every point.

This letter I had myself read at Jidda; it informed

Michael of the power and riches of our nation, and that they were absolute masters of the trade on the Red Sea, and strictly connected with the Sherriffe, and in a very particular manner with him, Metical Aga; that any accident happening to me would be an infamy and disgrace to him, and worse than death itself, because, that knowing Michael's power, and relying on his friendship, he had become security for my safety, after I arrived in his hands; that I was a man of consideration in my own country, servant to the king of it, who, though himself a Christian, governed his subjects, Mussulmen and Pagans, with the same impartiality and justice as he did Christians; that all my desire was to examine springs and rivers, trees and flowers, and the stars in the heavens, from which I drew knowledge very useful to preserve man's health and life; that I was no merchant, and had no dealings whatever in any sort of mercantile matters; and that I had no need of any man's money, as he had told Mahomet Gibberti to provide for any call I might have in that country, and for which he would answer, let the sum be what it would, as he had the word of my countrymen to repay it, which he considered better than the written security of any other people in the world. He then repeated very nearly the same words used in the beginning of the letter; and, upon this particular request, Metical Aga had sent him a distinct present, not to confound it with other political and commercial affairs, in which they were concerned together.

Upon reading this letter, Michael exclaimed, "Metical Aga does not know the situation of this country. Safety! where is that to be found? I am obliged to fight for my own life every day. Will Metical call this safety? Who knows, at this moment, if the king is in safety, or how long I shall be so? All I can do is to keep him with me. If I lose my own life, and

the king's, Metical Aga can never think it was in my power to preserve that of his stranger."—"No, no," says Ayto Aylo, who was then present, "you don't know the man; he is a devil on horseback; he rides better, and shoots better, than any man that ever came into Abyssinia; lose no time, put him about the king, and there is no fear of him. He is very sober and religious; he will do the king good." "Shoot!" says Michael, "he won't shoot at me as the Armenian did; will he? will he?" "Oh," continued Aylo, "you know these days are over. What is the Armenian? a boy, a slave to the Turk. When you see this man, you'll not think of the Armenian." It was finally agreed, that the letters the Greeks had received should be read to the king; that the letters I had from Metical Aga to the Ras should be given to Mahomet Gibberti, and that I should be introduced to the King and the Ras immediately after they were ready.

The reader may remember that, when I was at Cairo, I obtained letters from Mark, the Greek patriarch, to the Greeks at Gondar; and particularly one, in form of a bull, or rescript, to all the Greeks in Abyssinia. In this, after a great deal of pastoral admonition, the patriarch said, that, knowing their propensity to lying and vanity, and not being at hand to impose proper penances upon them for these sins, he exacted from them, as a proof of their obedience, that they would, with a good grace, undergo this mortification, than which there could be no gentler imposed, as it was only to speak the truth. He ordered them in a body to go to the king, in the manner and time they knew best, and to inform him that I was not to be confounded with the rest of white men, such as Greeks, who were all subject to the Turks, and slaves; but that I was a free man, of a free nation; and the best of them would be happy in being

my servant, as one of their brethren, Michael, then acrually was. I will not say but this was a bitter pill; for they were high in office, all except Petros, who had declined all employment after the murder of Joas his master, whose chamberlain he was. The order of the patriarch, however, was fairly and punctually performed; Petros was their spokesman; he was originally a shoemaker at Rhodes, clever, and handsome in his person, but a great coward, though, on such an occasion as the present, forward and capable enough.

I think it was about the 14th that these letters were to be all read. I expected at the ordinary hour, about five in the afternoon, to be sent for, and had rode out to Koscam with Ayto Heikel, the queen's chamberlain, to see the child, who was pretty well recovered of all its complaints, but very weak. In the interim I was sent for to the Ras, with orders to dispatch a man with the king's present, to wait for me at the palace, whither I was to go after leaving Michael. It was answered, That I was at Koscam, and the errand I had gone on mentioned; which disappointment, and the cause, did no way prejudice me with the Ras. Five in the evening was fixed as the hour, and notice sent to Koscam. I came a little before the time, and met Ayto Aylo at the door. He squeezed me by the hand, and said, "Refuse nothing, it can be all altered afterwards; but it is very necessary, on account of the priests and the populace, you have a place of some authority, otherwise you will be robbed and murdered the first time you go half a mile from home: fifty people have told me you have chests filled with gold, and that you can make gold, or bring what quantity you please from the Indies; and the reason of all this is, because you refused the queen and Ozoro Esther's offer of gold at Koscam, which you must never do again."

We went in, and saw the old man sitting upon a

sofa; his white hair was dressed in many short curls. He appeared to be thoughtful, but not displeased; his face was lean, his eyes quick and vivid, but seemed to be a little sore from exposure to the weather. He seemed to be about six feet high, though his lameness made it difficult to guess with accuracy. His air was perfectly free from constraint, what the French call *degagée*. In face and person he was liker my learned and worthy friend, the Count de Buffon, than any two men I ever saw in the world. They must have been bad physiognomists that did not discern his capacity and understanding by his very countenance. Every look conveyed a sentiment with it: he seemed to have no occasion for other language, and indeed he spoke little. I offered, as usual, to kiss the ground before him; and of this he seemed to take little notice, stretching out his hand and shaking mine upon my rising.

I sat down with Aylo, three or four of the judges, Petros, Heikel the queen's chamberlain, and an Azage from the king's house, who whispered something in his ear, and went out; which interruption prevented me from speaking as I was prepared to do, or give him my present, which a man held behind me. He began gravely, "Yagoube, I think that is your name, hear what I say to you, and mark what I recommend to you. You are a man, I am told, who make it your business to wander in the fields in search after trees and grass in solitary places, and to sit up all night alone looking at the stars of the heavens: Other countries are not like this, though this was never so bad as it is now. These wretches here are enemies to strangers; if they saw you alone in your own parlour, their first thought would be how to murder you; though they knew they were to get nothing by it, they would murder you for mere mischief."—"The devil is strong in them," says a voice from a corner of the

room, which appeared to be that of a priest. "Therefore," says the Ras, "after a long conversation with your friend Aylo, whose advice I hear you happily take, as indeed we all do, I have thought that situation best which leaves you at liberty to follow your own designs, at the same time that it puts your person in safety; that you will not be troubled with monks, about their religious matters, or in danger from these rascals that may seek to murder you for money."

"What are the monks?" says the same voice from the corner; "the monks will never meddle with such a man as this."—"Therefore the king," continued the Ras, without taking any notice of the interruption, "has appointed you Baalomaal *, and to command the Koccob horse, which I thought to have given to Francis, an old soldier of mine; but he is poor, and we will provide for him better, for these appointments have honour, but little profit." "Sir," says Francis, who was in presence, but behind, "it is in much more honourable hands than either mine or the Armenian's, or any other white man's, since the days of Hatze Menas, and so I told the king to-day." "Very well, Francis," says the Ras; "it becomes a soldier to speak the truth, whether it makes for or against himself. Go then to the king, and kiss the ground upon your appointment. I see you have already learned this ceremony of our's; Aylo and Heikel are very proper persons to go with you. The king expressed his surprise to me last night he had not seen you; and there too is Tecla Mariam, the king's secretary, who came with your appointment from the palace to-day." The man in the corner, that I took for a priest, was this Tecla Mariam, a scribe. Out of the king's pre-

* Literally "keeper of the goods, or effects." It is a post resembling that of our Lords of the bed-chamber. The Koccob horse are the cavalry in the guards.—E.

hence men of this order cover their heads, as do the priests, which was the reason of my mistake *.

I then gave him a present, which he scarce looked at, as a number of people were pressing in at the door from curiosity or business. Among these I discerned Abba Salama. Every body then went out but myself, and these people were rushing in behind me, and had divided me from my company. The Ras, however, seeing me standing alone, cried, "Shut the door;" and asked me, in a low tone of voice, "Have you any thing private to say?" "I see you are busy, Sir," said I; "but I will speak to Ozoro Esther." His anxious countenance brightened up in a moment. "That is true," says he, "Yagoube; it will require a long day to settle that account with you: Will the boy live?" "The life of man is in the hand of God," said I, "but I should hope the worst is over," upon which he called to one of his servants, "Carry Yagoube to Ozoro Esther."

It is needless for me to take up the reader's time with any thing but what illustrates my travels; he may therefore guess the conversation that flowed from a grateful heart on that occasion. I ordered her child to be brought to her every forenoon, upon condition she returned him soon after mid-day. I then took a speedy leave of Ozoro Esther, the reason of which I told her when she was following me to the door. She said, "When shall I lay my hands upon that ideot Aylo? The Ras would have done any thing; he had appointed you Palambaras, but, upon conversing with Aylo, he had changed his mind. He says it will create envy, and take up your time. What signifies their envy? Do not they envy Ras Michael? and where can you pass your time better than at court, with a command under the king?" I said, "All is for the best;

* This was the tsafat-tazazi, or royal historiographer, an office mentioned in the Introduction to the History of Abyssinia.—E.

Aylo did well; all is for the best." Then he was unconvinced, and saying, "I will not forgive this to Ayto Aylo these seven years."

Aylo and Heikel had gone on to the palace, wondering, as did the whole company, what could be my private conference with Michael, which, after playing abundantly with their curiosity, I explained to them next day.

I went afterwards to the king's palace, and met Aylo and Heikel at the door of the presence-chamber. Tecla Mariam walked before us to the foot of the throne; after which I advanced and prostrated myself upon the ground. "I have brought you a servant," says he to the king, "from so distant a country, that if you ever let him escape, we shall never be able to follow him, or know where to seek him." This was said facetiously by an old familiar servant; but the king made no reply, as far as we could guess, for his mouth was covered, nor did he shew any alteration of countenance. Five people were standing on each side of the throne, all young men, three on his left, and two on his right. One of these, the son of Tecla Mariam, (afterwards my great friend) who stood uppermost on the left hand, came up, and taking hold of me by the hand, placed me immediately above him; when seeing I had no knife in my girdle, he pulled out his own and gave it to me. Upon being placed, I again kissed the ground.

The king was in an alcove; the rest went out of sight from where the throne was, and sat down. The usual questions now began, about Jerusalem and the holy places—where my country was? which it was impossible to describe, as they knew the situation of no country but their own—why I came so far?—whether the moon and the stars, but especially the moon, was the same in my country as in theirs?—and a great many such idle and tiresome questions,

I had several times offered to take my present from the man who held it, that I might offer it to his Majesty and go away; but the king always made a sign to put it off, till, being tired to death with standing, I leaned against the wall. Aylo was fast asleep, and Ayto Heikel and the Greeks cursing their master in their heart for spoiling the good supper that Anthule his treasurer had prepared for us. This, as we afterwards found out, the king very well knew, and resolved to try our patience to the utmost. At last, Ayto Aylo stole away to bed, and every body else after him, except those who had accompanied me, who were ready to die with thirst, and drop down with weariness. It was agreed by those that were out of sight, to send Tecla Mariam to whisper in the king's ear, that I had not been well, which he did, but no notice was taken of it. It was now past ten o'clock, and he shewed no inclination to go to bed.

Hitherto, while there were strangers in the room, he had spoken to us by an officer called Kal Hatze, *the voice or word of the king*; but now, when there were nine or ten of us, his menial servants, only present, he uncovered his face and mouth, and spoke himself. Sometimes it was about Jerusalem, sometimes about horses, at other times about shooting; again about the Indies; how far I could look into the heavens with my telescopes: and all these were deliberately and circumstantially repeated, if they were not pointedly answered. I was absolutely in despair, and scarcely able to speak a word, inwardly mourning the hardness of my lot in this my first preferment, and sincerely praying it might be my last promotion in this court. At last all the Greeks began to be impatient, and got out of the corner of the room behind the alcove, and stood immediately before the throne. The king seemed to be astonished at seeing them.

and told them he thought they had been at home long ago. They said, however, they would not go without me; which the king said could not be, for one of the duties of my employment was to be charged with the door of his bed-chamber that night.

I think I could almost have killed him in that instant. At last Ayto Heikel, taking courage, came forward to him, pretending a message from the queen, and whispered him something in the ear, probably that the Ras would take it ill. He then laughed, said he thought we had supped, and dismissed us.

CHAP. IX.

Transactions at Gondar.

We went all to Anthule's house to supper in violent rage, such anger as is usual with hungry men. We brought with us from the palace three of my brother Baalomaals, and one who had stood to make up the number, though he was not in office; his name was Guebra Mascal; he was a sister's son of the Ras, and commanded one-third of the troops of Tigre, which carried fire-arms, that is about 2000 men. He was reputed the best officer of that kind that the Ras had, and was a man about 30 years of age, short, square, and well made, with a very unpromising countenance; flat nose, wide mouth, of a very yellow complexion, and much pitted with the small-pox; he had a most uncommon presumption upon the merit of past services, and had the greatest opinion of his own knowledge in the use of fire-arms, to which he did not scruple to say Ras Michael owed all his victories. Indeed it was to the good opinion that the Ras had of him as a soldier that he owed his being suffered to continue at Gondar; for he was suspected to have been familiar with one of his uncle's wives in Tigre, by whom it was thought he had a child; at least the Ras put away his wife, and never owned the child to be his *.

* We learn from Mr Salt's Journal, in Vol. III. of Lord Valentia's Travels, that Guebra Mascal, this very person, was made Governor of Tigré by Tecla Georgis in 1788, and though deposed, died in 1805 much regretted.—E.

This man supped with us that night, and began one of the most serious affairs I ever had in Abyssinia. Guebra Mascal as usual, vaunted incessantly his skill in fire-arms, the wonderful gun that he had, and feats he had done with it. Petros said, laughing, to him, "You have a genius for shooting, but you have had no opportunity to learn. Now Yagoube is come, he will teach you something worth talking of." They had all drank abundantly, and Guebra Mascal had uttered words that I thought were in contempt of me. "I believe," replied I, peevishly enough, "Guebra Mascal, I should suspect, from your discourse, you neither knew men nor guns; every gun of mine, in the hands of my servants, shall kill twice as far as yours; for my own, it is not worth my while to put a ball in it. When I compare with you, the end of a tallow-candle in my gun shall do more execution than an iron ball in the best of yours, with all the skill and experience you pretend to."

He said I was a Frank, and a liar; and, upon my immediately rising up, he gave me a kick with his foot. I was quite blind with passion, seized him by the throat, and threw him on the ground, stout as he was. The Abyssinians knew nothing of either wrestling or boxing. He drew his knife as he was falling, attempting to cut me in the face; but his arm not being at freedom, all he could do was to give me a very trifling stab, or wound, near the crown of the head, so that the blood trickled down over my face. I had tript him up, but till then had never struck him. I now wrested the knife from him with a full intention to kill him; but Providence directed better. Instead of the point, I struck so violently with the handle upon his face as to leave scars, which would be distinguished even among the deep marks of the small-pox. An adventure so new, and so unexpected, presently

overcame the effects of wine. It was too late to disturb any body either in the palace, or at the house of the Ras. A hundred opinions were immediately started; some were for sending us up to the king, as we were actually in the precincts of the palace, where lifting a hand is death. Ayto Heikel advised that I should go, late as it was, to Koscam; and Petros, that I should repair immediately to the house of Ayto Aylo, while the Baalomaals were for taking me to sleep in the palace. Anthule, in whose house I was, and who was therefore most shocked at the outrage, wished me to stay in his house, where I was, from a supposition that I was seriously wounded, which all of them, seeing the blood fall over my eyes, seemed to think was the case; and he, in the morning, at the king's rising, was to state the matter as it happened. All these advices appeared good when they were proposed; for my part, I thought they only tended to make bad worse, and bore the appearance of guilt, of which I was not conscious.

I now determined to go home, and to bed in my own house. With that intention, I washed my face and wound with vinegar, and found the blood to be already staunched. I then wrapt myself up in my cloak, and returned home without accident, and went to bed. But this would neither satisfy Ayto Heikel nor Petros, who went to the house of Ayto Aylo, then past midnight, so that early in the morning, when scarce light, I saw him come into my chamber. Guebra Mascal had fled to the house of Kefla Yasous his relation; and the first news we heard in the morning, after Ayto Aylo arrived, were, that Guebra Mascal was in irons at the Ras's house.

Every person that came afterwards brought up some new account; the whole people present had been

examined, and had given, without variation, the true particulars of my forbearance, and his insolent behaviour. Every body trembled for some violent resolution the Ras was to take on my first complaint. The town was full of Tigre soldiers, and nobody saw clearer than I did, however favourable a turn this had taken for me in the beginning, it might be my destruction in the end.

I asked Ayto Aylo his opinion. He seemed at a loss to give it me; but said, in an uncertain tone of voice, he could wish that I would not complain of Guebra Mascal while I was angry, or while the Ras was so inveterate against him, till some of his friends had spoken, and appeased, at least, his first resentment. I answered, "That I was of a contrary opinion, and that no time was to be lost: remember the letter of Mahomet Gibberti; remember his confidence yesterday of my being safe where he was; remember the influence of Ozoro Esther, and do not let us lose a moment." "What," says Aylo to me in great surprise, "are you mad? Would you have him cut to pieces in the midst of 20,000 of his countrymen? Would you be dimmenia, that is, guilty of the blood of all the province of Tigre, through which you must go in your way home?" "Just the contrary," said I; "nobody has so great a right over the Ras's anger as I have, being the person injured; and, as you and I can get access to Ozoro Esther when we please, let us go immediately thither, and stop the progress of this affair while it is not yet generally known. People that talk of my being wounded expect to see me, I suppose, without a leg or an arm. When they see me so early riding in the street, all will pass for a story, as it should do. Would you wish to pardon him entirely?"— "That goes against my heart, too," says Aylo; "he is a

bad man."—"My good friend," said I, "be in this guided by me; I know we both think the same thing. If he is a bad man, he was a bad man before I knew him. You know what you told me yourself of the Ras's jealousy of him. What if he was to revenge his own wrongs, under pretence of giving me satisfaction for mine? Come, lose no time, get upon your mule, go with me to Ozoro Esther, I will answer for the consequences."

We arrived there; the Ras was not sitting in judgment; he had drank hard the night before, on occasion of Powussen's marriage, and was not in bed when the story of the fray reached him. We found Ozoro Esther in a violent anger and agitation, which was much alleviated by my laughing. On her asking me about my wound, which had been represented to her as dangerous, "I am afraid," said I, "poor Guebra Mascal is worse wounded than I." "Is he wounded too?" says she; "I hope it is in his heart." "Indeed, replied I, "Madam, there are no wounds on either side. He was very drunk, and I gave him several blows upon the face as he deserved, and he has already got all the chastisement he ought to have; it was all a piece of folly." "Prodigious!" says she; "is this so?" "It is so," says Aylo, "and you shall hear it all by-and-by; only let us stop the propagation of this foolish story."

The Ras in the instant sent for us. He was naked, sitting on a stool, and a slave swathing up his lame leg with a broad belt or bandage. I asked him, calmly and pleasantly, if I could be of any service to him? He looked at me with a grin, the most ghastly I ever saw, as half-displeased. "What," says he, "are you all mad? Aylo, what is the matter between him and that miscreant Guebra Mascal?"—"Why," said I, "I am come to tell you that myself; why do you ask

Ayto Aylo? Guebra Mascal got drunk, was insolent, and struck me. I was sober and beat him, as you will see by his face; and I have not come to you to say I am sorry that I lifted my hand against your nephew; but he was in the wrong, and drunk; and I thought it was better to chastise him on the spot, than trust him to you, who perhaps might take the affair to heart; for we all know your justice, and that being your relation is no excuse when you judge between man and man. "I order you, Aylo," says Michael, "as you esteem my friendship, to tell me the truth, really as it was, and without disguise or concealment."

Aylo began accordingly to relate the whole history, when a servant called me out to Ozoro Esther. I found with her another nephew of the Ras, a much better man, called Welleta Selasse, who came from Kefla Yasous, and Guebra Mascal himself, desiring I would forgive and intercede for him, for it was a drunken quarrel without malice. Ozoro Esther had told him part. "Come in with me," said I, "and you shall see I never will leave the Ras till he forgive him." "Let him punish him," says Welleta Selasse; "he is a bad man, but don't let the Ras either kill or maim him." "Come," said I, "let us go to the Ras, and he shall neither kill, maim, nor punish him, if I can help it. It is my first request; if he refuses me, I will return to Jidda; come and hear."

Aylo had urged the thing home to the Ras in the proper light—that of my safety. "You are a wise man," says Michael, now perfectly cool, as soon as he saw me and Welleta Selasse. "It is a man like you that goes far in safety, which is the end we all aim at. I feel the affront offered you more than you do, but will not have the punishment attributed to you; this affair shall turn to your honour and security, and in

that light only I can pass over his insolence.—Welleta Selasse," says he, falling into a violent passion in an instant, "What sort of behaviour is this my men have adopted with strangers; and my stranger, too, and in the king's palace, and the king's servant? What! am I dead? or become incapable of governing longer?" Welleta Selasse bowed, but was afraid to speak, and indeed the Ras looked like a fiend.

"Come," says the Ras, "let me see your head." I shewed him where the blood was already hardened, and said it was a very slight cut. "A cut," continued Michael, "over that part, with one of our knives, is mortal." "You see, Sir," said I, "I have not even clipt the hair about the wound; it is nothing. Now give me your promise you will set Guebra Mascal at liberty; and not only that, but you are not to reproach him with the affair further than that he was drunk, not a crime in this country." "No, truly," says he, "it is not; but that is, because it is very rare that people fight with knives when they are drunk. I scarce ever heard of it, even in the camp." "I fancy," said I, "endeavouring to give a light turn to the conversation, they have not often wherewithal to get drunk in your camp." "Not this last year," says he, laughing, "there were no houses in the country." "But let me only merit," said I, "Welleta Selasse's friendship, by making him the messenger of good news to Guebra Mascal, that he is at liberty, and you have forgiven him." "At liberty!" says he, "Where is he?" "In your house," said I, "somewhere, in irons." "That is Esther's intelligence," continued the Ras; "these women tell you all their secrets, but when I remember your behaviour to them I do not wonder at it; and that consideration likewise obliges me to grant what you

ask. Go, Welleta Selasse, and free that dog from his collar, and direct him to go to Welleta Michael," who will give him his orders to levy the meery in Weggora; let him not see my face till he returns."

Ozoro Esther gave us breakfast, to which several of the Greeks came. After which I went to Koscam, where I heard a thousand curses upon Guebra Mascal. The whole affair was now made up, and the king was acquainted with the issue of it. I stood in my place, where he shewed me very great marks of favour; he was grave, however, and sorrowful, as if mortified with what had happened. The king ordered me to stay and dine at the palace, and he would send me my dinner. I there saw the sons of Kasmati Eshte, Aylo, and Engedan, and two Welleta Selasses; one the son of Tecla Mariam, the other the son of a great nobleman in Gojam, all young men, with whom I lived ever after in perfect familiarity and friendship. The two last were my brethren Baloomaal, or gentlemen of the king's bed-chamber.

They all seemed to have taken my cause to heart more than I wished them to do, for fear it should be productive of some new quarrel. For my own part, I never was so dejected in my life. The troublesome prospect before me presented itself day and night. I more than twenty times resolved to return by Tigre, to which I was more inclined by the loss of a young man who accompanied me through Barbary, and assisted me in the drawings of architecture which I made for the king there, part of which he was still advancing here, when a dysentery, which had attacked him in Arabia Felix, put an end to his life* at Gondar. A considerable disturbance was apprehended upon bury-

* See Introduction.

ing him in a church-yard. Abba Salama used his utmost endeavours to raise the populace and take him out of his grave; but some exertions of the Ras quieted both Abba Salama and the tumults.

I began, however, to look upon every thing now as full of difficulty and danger; and, from this constant fretting and despondency, I found my health much impaired, and that I was upon the point of becoming seriously ill. There was one thing that contributed in some measure to dissipate these melancholy thoughts, which was, that all Gondar was in one scene of festivity. Ozoro Ayabdar, daughter of the late Welled Hawaryat, by Ozora Altash, Ozoro Esther's sister, and the Iteghe's youngest daughter, consequently grand-daughter to Michael, was married to Powussen, now governor of Begemder. The king gave her large districts of land in that province, and Ras Michael a large portion of gold, muskets, cattle and horses. All the town, that wished to be well looked upon by either party, brought something considerable as a present. The Ras, Ozoro Esther, and Ozoro Altash, entertained all Gondar. A vast number of cattle was slaughtered every day, and the whole town looked like one great market; the common people, in every street, appearing loaded with pieces of raw beef, while drink circulated in the same proportion. The Ras insisted upon my dining with him every day, when he was sure to give me a headach with the quantity of mead, or hydromel, he forced me to swallow, a liquor that never agreed with me from the first day to the last.

After dinner we slipt away to parties of ladies, where anarchy prevailed as completely as at the house of the Ras. All the married women ate, drank, and smoked, like the men; and it is impossible to convey to the reader any idea of this bacchanalian

scene in terms of common decency. I found it necessary to quit this riot for a short time, and get leave to breathe the fresh air of the country, at such a distance as that, once a day, or once in two days, I might be at the palace, and avoid the constant succession of these violent scenes of debauchery, of which no European can form any idea, and which it was impossible to escape, even at Koscam.

Although the king's favour, the protection of the Ras, and my obliging, attentive, and lowly behaviour to every body, had made me as popular as I could wish at Gondar, and among the Tigrans fully as much as those of Amhara, yet it was easy to perceive, that the cause of my quarrel with Guebra Mascal was not yet forgot.

One day, when I was standing by the king in the palace, he asked, in discourse, "Whether I, too, was not drunk in the quarrel with Guebra Mascal, before we came to blows?" and, upon my saying that I was perfectly sober, both before and after, because Anthule's red wine was finished, and I never willingly drank hydromel, or mead, he asked with a degree of keenness, "Did you then soberly say to Guebra Mascal, that an end of a tallow candle, in a gun in your hand, would do more execution than an iron bullet in his?"—"Certainly, Sir, I did so."—"And why did you say this?" says the king dryly enough, and in a manner I had not before observed. "Because," replied I, "it was truth, and a proper reproof to a vain man, who, whatever eminence he might have obtained in a country like this, has not knowledge enough to entitle him to the trust of cleaning a gun in mine." "O, ho!" continued the king; "as for his knowledge, I am not speaking of that, but about his gun. You will not persuade me, that, with a tallow candle, you can kill a man or a horse?"—"Pardon me, Sir", said I, bowing very respectfully, "I will attempt to persuade

you of nothing but what you please to be convinced of: Guebra Mascal is my equal, no more; you are my master, and, while I am at your court, under your protection, you are in place of my sovereign; it would be great presumption in me to argue with you, or lead to a conversation against an opinion that you profess you are already fixed in."—"No, no," says he, with an air of great kindness, "by no means; I was only afraid you would expose yourself before bad people; what you say to me is nothing."—"And what I say to you, Sir, has always been as scrupulously true, as if I had been speaking to the king, my native sovereign and master. Whether I can kill a man with a candle, or not, is an experiment that should not be made. Tell me, however, what I shall do before you, that you may deem an equivalent? Will piercing the table upon which your dinner is served (it was of sycamore, about three quarters of an inch thick), at the length of this room, be deemed a sufficient proof of what I advance?"

"Ah, Yagoube, Yagoube," says the king, "take care what you say. That is indeed more than Guebra Mascal will do at that distance; but take great care; you don't know these people; they will lie themselves all day; nay, their whole life is one lie; but of you they expect better, or would be glad to find worse; take care." Ayto Engedan, who was then present, said, "I am sure if Yagoube says he can do it, he will do it; but how, I don't know. Can you shoot through my shield with a tallow candle?"—"To you, Ayto Engedan," said I, "I can speak freely; I could shoot through your shield if it was the strongest in the army, and kill the strongest man in the army that held it before him. When will you see this tried?"—"Why now," says the king; "there is *nobody here*."—"The sooner the better," said I; "I

would not wish to remain for a moment longer under so disagreeable an imputation as that of lying, an infamous one in *my* country, whatever it may be in this. Let me send for my gun; the king will look out at the window."—"*Nobody*," says he, "knows any thing of it; *nobody will come*."

The king appeared to be very anxious, and, I saw plainly incredulous. The gun was brought; Engedan's shield was produced, which was of a strong buffalo's hide. I said to him, "This is a weak one, give me one stronger." He shook his head, and said, "Ah, Yagoube, you'll find it strong enough; Engedan's shield is known to be no toy." Tecla Mariam brought such a shield, and the Billetana Gœta Tecla another, both of which were most excellent in their kind. I loaded the gun before them, first with powder, then upon it slid down one half of what we call a farthing candle; and, having beat off the handles of three shields, I put them close in contact with each other, and set them all three against a post.

"Now Engedan," said I, "when you please say—Fire! but mind you have taken leave of your good shield for ever." The word was given and the gun fired. It struck the three shields, neither in the most difficult nor the easiest part for perforation, something less than half way between the rim and the boss. The candle went through the three shields with such violence, that it dashed itself to a thousand pieces against a stone wall behind it. I turned to Engedan, saying very lowly, gravely, and without exultation or triumph, on the contrary, with absolute indifference, "Did not I tell you your shield was naught?" A great shout of applause followed from about a thousand people that were gathered together. The three shields were carried to the king, who exclaimed in great transport, "I did not believe it before

I saw it, and can scarce believe it now I have seen it! Where is Guebra Mascal's confidence now? But what do either he or we know? We know nothing." I thought he looked abashed.

"Ayto Engedan," said I, "we must have a touch at that table. It was said, the piercing that was more than Guebra Mascal could do. We have one half of the candle left still; it is the thinnest, weakest half, and I shall put the wick foremost, because the cotton is softest." The table being now properly placed, to Engedan's utmost astonishment, the candle, with the wick foremost, went through the table, as the other had gone through the three shields. "By St Michael!" says Engedan, "Yagoube, hereafter say to me you can raise my father Eshte from the grave, and I will believe you." Some priests who were there, though surprised at first, seemed afterwards to treat it rather lightly, because they thought it below their dignity to be surprised at any thing. They said it was done by writing (mucktoub), by which they meant magic. Every body embraced that opinion, as an evident and rational one, and so the wonder with them ceased. But it was not so with the king; It made the most favourable and lasting impression upon his mind; nor did I ever after see, in his countenance, any marks either of doubt or diffidence, but always, on the contrary, the most decisive proofs of friendship, confidence, and attention, and the most implicit belief of every thing I advanced upon any subject from my own knowledge.

The experiment was twice tried afterwards, in presence of Ras Michael. But he would not risk his good shields, and always produced the table, saying, "Engedan and these foolish boys were rightly served; they thought Yagoube was a liar like themselves, and they lost their shields; but I believed

him, and gave him my table for curiosity only, and so I saved mine."

As I may now say I was settled in this country, and had an opportunity of being informed of the manners, government, and present state of it, I shall here inform the reader of what I think most worthy his attention, whether ancient or modern, while we are yet in peace, before we are called out to a campaign or war, attended with every disadvantage, danger, and source of confusion.

CHAP. X.

Geographical Division of Abyssinia into Provinces.

At Masuah, that is, on the coast of the Red Sea, begins an imaginary division of Abyssinia into two, which is rather a division of language, than strictly to be understood as territorial. The first division is called Tigre, between the Red Sea, and the river Tacazze. Between that river and the Nile, westward, where it bounds the Galla, it is called Amhara.

Whatever convenience there may be from this division, there is neither geographical nor historical precision in it; for there are many little provinces included in the first, that do not belong to Tigre; and, in the second division, which is Amhara, that which gives the name is but a very small part of it.

Again, in point of language, there is a variety of tongues spoken in the second division besides that of Amhara. In Tigre, however, the separation as to languages holds true, as there is no tongue known there but Geez, or that of the Shepherds.

Masuah, in ancient times, was one of the principal places of residence of the Baharnagash, who, when he was not there himself, constantly left his deputy, or lieutenant. In summer he resided for several months in the island of Dahalac, then accounted part of his territory. He was, after the King and Betwudet,

the person of the greatest consideration in the kingdom, and was invested with sendick and nagareet, the kettle-drum and colours, marks of supreme command.

Masuah was taken, and a basha established there soon after, as we have seen in the history, in the reign of Menas, when the Baharnagash, named Isaac, confederated with the Turkish basha, and ceded to him a great territory, part of his own government, and with it Dobarwa, the capital of his province, divided only by the river Mareb from Tigre. From this time this office fell into disrepute in the kingdom. The sendick and nagareet, the marks of supreme power were taken from him, and he never was allowed a place in council, unless specially called on by the king. He preserves his privilege of being crowned with gold; but when appointed, has a cloak thrown over him, the one side white, the other a dark blue, and the officer, who crowns him, admonishes him of what will befal him, if he preserves his allegiance, which is signified by the white side of the cloak; and the disgrace and punishment that is to attend his treason, and which has fallen upon his predecessors, which he figures to him by turning up the colour of mourning.

Besides the dignity attending this office, it was also one of the most lucrative. Frankincense, myrrh, and a species of cinnamon, called by the Italians Cannella, with several kinds of gums and dyes, all very precious, from Cape Gardefan to Bilur, were the valuable produce of this country; but this territory, though considerable in length, is not of any great breadth; for, from south of Hadea to Masuah, it consists in a belt seldom above forty miles from the sea, which is bounded by a ridge of very high mountains, running parallel to the Indian Ocean and the Red Sea, as far as Masuah.

After Azab begin the mines of fossile salt, which, cut into square solid bricks of about a foot long, serve in place of the silver currency in Abyssinia; and from this, as from a kind of mint, great benefit accrues also.

From Masuah the same narrow belt continues to Suakem; nay, indeed, though the rains do not reach so far, the mountains continue to the Isthmus of Suez. This northern province of the Baharnagash is called the Habab, or the land of the Agaazi, or Shepherds; they speak one language which they call Geez, or the language of the Agaazi. From the earliest times, they have had letters and writing among them; and no other has ever been introduced into Abyssinia, to this day. as we have already observed.

Since the expulsion of the Turks from Dobarwa and the continent of Abyssinia, Masuah has been governed by a Naybe, himself one of the Shepherds, but Mahometan. A treaty formerly subsisted, that the king should receive half of the revenue of the custom-house in Masuah; in return for which the Naybe was suffered to enjoy that small stripe of barren, dry country, called Samhar, inhabited by black shepherds, called Shiho, reaching from Hamazen on the north to the foot of the mountain Taranta on the south; but, by the favour of Michael, that is by bribery and corruption, he has possessed himself of two large frontier towns, Dixan and Dobarwa, by lease, for a trifling sum, which he pays the king yearly; this must necessarily very much weaken this state, if it should ever again have war with the Turks, of which, indeed, there is no great probability.

The next province in Abyssinia, as well for greatness as riches, power, and dignity, and nearest Masuah, is Tigre. It is bounded by the territory of the Baharnagash, that is, by the river Mareb on the east,

and the Tacazze upon the west. It is about one hundred and twenty miles broad from E. to W., and two hundred from N. to S. This is its present situation. The hand of usurping power has abolished all distinction on the west-side of the Tacazze; besides, many large governments, such as Enderta and Antalow, and great part of the Baharnagash, were swallowed up in this province to the east.

What, in a special manner makes the riches of Tigre, is, that it lies nearest the market, which is Arabia; and all the merchandise destined to cross the Red Sea must pass through this province, so that the governor has the choice of all commodities wherewith to make his market. The strongest male, the most beautiful female slaves, the purest gold, the largest teeth of ivory, all must pass through his hand. Fire-arms, moreover, which for many years have decided who is the most powerful in Abyssinia, all these come from Arabia, and not one can be purchased without his knowing to whom it goes, and after his having had the first refusal of it.

Siré, a province about twenty-five miles broad, and not much more in length, is reckoned as part of Tigre also; but this is not a new usurpation. It lost the rank of a province, and was united to Tigre for the misbehaviour of its governor Kasmati Claudius, in an expedition against the Shangalla in the reign of Yasous the Great. In my time, it began again to get into reputation, and was, by Ras Michael's own consent, disjoined from his province, and given first to his son, Welled Hawaryat, together with Samen, and, after his death, to Ayto Tesfos, a very amiable man, gallant soldier, and good officer; who, fighting bravely in the king's service, at the battle of Serbraxos, was there wounded and taken prisoner, and died of his wounds afterwards.

After passing the Tacazze, the boundary between Sire and Samen, we come to that mountainous province called by the last name. A large chain of rugged mountains, where is the Jews Rock (which I shall often mention as the highest), reaches from the south of Tigre down near to Waldubba, the low hot country that bounds Abyssinia on the north. It is about eighty miles in length, in few places thirty broad, and in some much less. It is in great part possessed by Jews; and there Gideon and Judith, king and queen of that nation, and, as they say, of the house of Judah, maintain still their ancient sovereignty and religion from very early times.

On the N. E. of Tigre lies the province of Begemder. It borders upon Angot, whose governor is called Angot Ras; but the whole province now, excepting a few villages, is conquered by the Galla.

It has Amhara, which runs parallel to it, on the south, and is separated from it by the river Bashilo. Both these provinces are bounded by the river Nile on the west. Begemder is about 180 miles in its greatest length, and 60 in breadth; comprehending Lasta, a mountainous province, sometimes depending on Begemder, but often in rebellion. The inhabitants are esteemed the best soldiers in Abyssinia, men of great strength and stature, but cruel and uncivilized; so that they are called in common conversation and writing, the peasants, or barbarians of Lasta; they pay to the king 1000 ounces of gold.

Several small provinces are now dismembered from Begemder; such as Foggora, a small stripe, reaching S. and N. about 35 miles between Emfras and Dara, and about 12 miles broad from E. to W. from the mountains of Begemder to the lake Tzana. On the north end of this are two small governments, Dreeda and Karoota, the only territory in Abyssinia that pro-

duces wine; the merchants trade to Caffa and Nerea, in the country of the Galla. We speak of these territories as they are in point of right; but, when a nobleman of great power is governor of the province of Begemder, he values not lesser rights, but unites them all to his province.

Begemder is the strength of Abyssinia in horsemen. It is said, that, with Lasta, it can bring out 45,000 men; but this, as far as ever I could inform myself, is a great exaggeration. They are exceeding good soldiers when they are pleased with their general, and the cause for which they fight; otherwise, they are easily divided, a great many private interests being continually kept alive, as it is thought industriously, by government itself. It is well-stocked with cattle of every kind, all very beautiful. The mountains are full of iron-mines; they are not so steep and rocky, nor so frequent, as in other provinces, if we except only Lasta, and abound in all sort of wild fowl and game.

The south end of the province, near Nefas Musa, is cut into prodigious gullies, apparently by floods, of which we have no history. It is the great barrier against the encroachments of the Galla; and, by many attempts, they have tried to make a settlement in it, but all in vain. Whole tribes of them have been extinguished in this their endeavour.

In many provinces of Abyssinia, favour is the only necessary to procure the government; others are given to poor noblemen, that, by fleecing the people, they may grow rich, and repair their fortune. But the consequence of Begemder is so well known to the state, as reaching so near the metropolis, and supplying it so constantly with all sorts of provisions, that none but noblemen of rank, family, and character, able to maintain a large number of troops always on foot, and in good order, are trusted with its government.

Immediately next to this is Amhara, between the two rivers Bashilo and Geshen. The length of this country from E. to W. is about 120 miles, and its breadth something more than 40. It is a very mountainous country, full of nobility; the men are reckoned the handsomest in Abyssinia, as well as the bravest. With the ordinary arms, the lance and shield, they are thought to be superior to double the number of any other soldiers in the kingdom. What, besides, added to the dignity of this province, was the high mountain of Geshen, or the grassy mountain, whereon the king's sons were formerly imprisoned, till surprised and murdered there in the Adelan war.

Between the two rivers Geshen and Samba, is a low, unwholesome, though fertile, province, called Walaka; and southward of that is Upper Shoa. This province, or kingdom, was famous for the retreat it gave to the only remaining prince of the house of Solomon, who fled from the massacre of his brethren by Judith, about the year 900, upon the rock of Damo. Here the royal family remained in security, and increased in number, for near 400 years, till they were restored. From thenceforward, as long as the king resided in the south of his dominions, great tenderness and distinction was shewn to the inhabitants of this province; and when the king returned again to Tigre, he abandoned them tacitly to their own government.

Amha Yasous, prince at this day, and lineal descendent of the governor, who first acknowledged the king, is now by connivance sovereign of that province. In order to keep himself as independent and separate from the rest of Abyssinia as possible, he has sacrificed the province of Walaka, which belonged to him, to the Galla, who, by his own desire, have surrounded Shoa on every side. But it is full of the bravest, best horsemen, and best accoutred, beyond all comparison,

of any in Abyssinia, and, when they please they can dispossess the Galla. Safe and independent as the prince of Shoa now is, he is still the loyalist, and the friend to monarchy he ever was; and, upon any signal distress happening to the king, he never failed to succour him powerfully with gold and troops, far beyond the quota formerly due from his province. Shoa boasts, likewise, the honour of being the native country of Tecla Haimanout, restorer of the line of Solomon, the founder of the monastery and order of the monks of Debra Libanos, and of the power and wealth of the Abuna, and the clergy in general of Abyssinia.

Gojam, from N. E. to S. E. is about 80 miles in length, and 40 in breadth. It is a very flat country, and all in pasture; has few mountains, but these are very high ones, and are chiefly on the banks of the Nile, to the S., which river surrounds the province; so that, to a person who should walk round Gojam, the Nile would be always on his left hand, from where it went south, falling out of the lake Tzana, till it turns north through Fazuclo into the country of Sennaar and Egypt.

Gojam is full of great herds of cattle, the largest in the high parts of Abyssinia. The men are in the lowest esteem as soldiers, but the country is very populous. The Jesuits were settled in many convents throughout the province, and are no where half so much detested. The monks of Gojam are those of St Eustathius, which may be called the low church of Abyssinia. They are much inclined to turbulence in religious matters; and are, therefore, always made tools by discontented people, who have no religion at all.

On the south-east of the kingdom of Gojam is Damot. It is bounded by the Temci on the east, by the

Gult on the west, by the Nile on the south, and by the high mountains of Amid Amid on the north. It is about 40 miles in length from north to south, and something more than 20 in breadth from east to west. But all this peninsula, surrounded with the river, is called Gojam, in general terms, from a line down through the south end of the lake, to Mine, the passage of the Nile in the way to Narea.

It is surprising the Jesuits, notwithstanding their long abode in Gojam, have not known where this neighbouring country of Damot was situated, but have placed it south of the Nile. They were often, however, in Damot, when Sela Christos was attempting the conquest and conversion of the Agows *.

On the other side of Amid Amid is the province of the Agows; bounded by those mountains on the east; by Bure and Umbarma, and the country of the Gongas, on the west; by Damot and Gafat upon the south; and Dingleber on the north.

All those countries from Abbo, such as Goutto, Aroosi, and Wainadega, were formerly inhabited by Agows; but, partly by the war with the Galla beyond the Nile, partly by their own constant rebellions, this territory, called Maitsha, which is the flat country on both sides of the Nile, is quite uninhabited, and at last has been given to colonies of peaceable Galla, chiefly Djawi, who fill the whole low country, to the foot of the mountains Aformasha, in place of the Agows, the first occupiers.

Maitsha, from the flatness of the country, not draining soon after the rains, is in all places wet, but in many miry and marshy. It produces little or no corn; but depends entirely upon a plant called Ensete †, which furnishes the people both with wholesome

* The country beyond the Nile is sometimes called, in the Abyssinian MS. Annals, Amot Abay, or the greater Damot.—E.

† See the article Ensete in the appendix.

and delicate food throughout the year. For the rest, this province abounds in large fine cattle, and breeds some indifferent horses.

Upon the mountains above Maitsha is the country of the Agows; the richest province still in Abyssinia, notwithstanding the multitude of devastations it has suffered. They lie round the country above described, from Aformasha to Quaquera, where are the heads of two large rivers, the Kelti and Branti. These are called the Agows of Damot, from their nearness to that province, in contradistinction to the Agows of Lasta, who are called Tcheratz-Agow, from Tchera, a principal town, tribe, and district near Lasta and Begemder.

The Gafats, inhabiting a small district adjoining to the Galla have also distinct languages; so have the Galla themselves, of whom we have often spoken; they are a large nation.

From Dingleber, all along the lake, below the mountains bounding Guesgué and Kuara, is called Dembea. This low province on the south of Gondar, and Woggora, the small high province on the east, are all sown with wheat, and are the granaries of Abyssinia. Dembea seems once to have been occupied entirely by the lake, and we see all over it marks that cannot be mistaken; so that this large extent of water is visibly upon the decrease: and this agrees with what is observed of stagnant pools in general, throughout the world. Dembea is called Atte-Kolla, *the king's food*, or maintenance; its produce being assigned for the supplying of the king's household. It is governed by an officer called Cantiba: it is a lucrative post; but he is not reckoned one of the great officers of the empire, and has no place in council.

South from Dembea is Kuara, a very mountainous province, confining upon the Pagan blacks, or Shangalla, called Gongas and Guba, the Macrobii of the

ancients. It is a very unwholesome province, but abounding in gold, not of its own produce, but that of its neighbourhood; these are Pagans—Guba, Nuba, and Shangalla. Kuara signifies the sun, and Beja (that is, Atbara, and the low parts of Sennaar, the country of the Shepherds adjoining) signifies the moon, in the language of these Shangalla. These names are some remains of their ancient superstitions. Kuara was the native country of the Iteghe, or queen-regent, of Kasmati Eshte, Welled de l'Oul, Gueta Eusebius, and Palambaras Mammo.

In the low country of Kuara, near to Sennaar, there is a settlement of Pagan blacks called Ganjar. They are mostly cavalry, and live entirely by hunting and plundering the Arabs of Atbara and Fazuclo. Their origin is this: Upon the invasion of the Arabs, after the coming of Mahomet, the black slaves deserted from their masters, the Shepherds, and took up their habitation; where they have not considerably multiplied, otherwise than by the accession of vagrants and fugitives, whom they get from both kingdoms. They are generally under the command of the governor of Kuara, and were so when I was in Abyssinia; though they refused to follow their governor Coque Abou Barca, to fight against Michael; but whether from fear or affection, I know not; I believe the former.

The governor of Kuara is one of the great officers of state, and, being the king's lieutenant-general, has absolute power in his province, and carries *sendick* and *nagareet*. His kettle-drums are silver, and his privilege is to beat these drums even in marching through the capital, which no governor of a province is permitted to do; none but the king's nagareets, or kettle-drums, being suffered to be beat there, or any where in a town where the king is; but the governor of Kuara is entitled to continue beating his drums till he comes to the foot of the outer stair of the king's pa-

lace. This privilege, from some good behaviour of the first officer to whom the command was given, was conferred upon the post by David II., called Degami Daid, who conquered the province from the Shepherds, its old inhabitants.

Nara, and Ras el Feel, Tchelga, and on to Tcherkin, is a frontier wholly inhabited by Mahometans. Its government is generally given to a stranger, often to a Mahometan; but one of that faith is always deputy-governor. The use of keeping troops here is to defend the friendly Arabs and Shepherds, who remain in their allegiance to Abyssinia, from the resentment of the Arabs of Sennaar, their neighbours; and, by means of these friendly Arabs and Shepherds, secure a constant supply of horses for the king's troops. It is a barren stripe, of a very hot unwholesome country, full of thick woods, and fit only for hunting. The inhabitants, fugitives from all nations, are chiefly Mahometans, but very bold and expert horsemen, using no other weapon but the broad sword, with which they attack the elephant and rhinoceros.

There are many other small provinces, which occasionally are annexed, and sometimes are separated; such as Guesgue, to the eastward of Kuara; Waldubba, between the rivers Guangue and Angrab; Tzegade and Walkayt, on the west side of Waldubba; Abergale and Salawa, in the neighbourhood of Begemder; Temben *, Dobas, Giannamora, Bur, and Engana, in the neighbourhood of Tigre; and many others: Such, at least, was the state of the country in my time, very different, in all respects, from what it has been represented. As to the precedency of these provinces, we shall further speak, when we come to mention the officers of state, and internal government in this country.

* The district of Kefla Yasous. His son Weleda Selassé, lives chiefly at Antalow in Enderta. See Valentia's travels, Vol. III.

CHAP. XI.

Various Customs in Abyssinia similar to those in Persia, &c.—A bloody Banquet described, &c.

For the sake of regularity, I shall here notice what might clearly be inferred from what is gone before. The crown of Abyssinia is hereditary, and has always been so, in one particular family, *supposed* to be that of Solomon by the queen of Saba, Negesta Azab, or queen of the south *. It is, nevertheless, elective in this line; and there is no law of the land, nor custom, which gives the eldest son an exclusive title to succeed to his father.

The practice has, indeed, been quite the contrary. When, at the death of a king, his sons are old enough to govern, and, by some accident, not yet sent prisoners to the mountain, then the eldest, or he that is next, and not confined, generally takes possession of the

* The royal family of Abyssinia is probably sprung from that of Hamyar, or Saba, in Yemen. The Agaazi are a very ancient colony of the Hamyarites; and hence the name Assab was transferred to the African side of the gulf. We find, in the Greek writers who treat of the Sabeans in Yemen, that they had many customs which are still found in Abyssinia. Many of the Hamyarites were converted to Judaism a considerable time before the era of Christianity. See Introduction to the Chronological table in Vol. VII.—E.

throne by the strength of his father's friends; but if no heir is then in the low country, the choice of the king is always according to the will of the minister, which passes for that of the people; and, his inclination and interest being to govern, he never fails to choose an infant, whom afterwards he directs, ruling the kingdom absolutely during the minority, which generally exhausts, or is equal to, the term of his life. From that flow all the misfortunes of this unhappy country. This very defect arises from a desire to institute a more than ordinary perfect form of government; for the first position of the Abyssinians was, "Woe be to the kingdom whose king is a child!" and this they know must often happen, when succession is left to the course of nature. But when there was a choice to be made out of two hundred persons, all of the same family, all capable of reigning, it was their own fault, they thought, if they had not always a prince of proper age and qualification to rule the kingdom, according to the necessities of the times, and to preserve the succession of the family in the house of Solomon, agreeable to the laws of the land. And, indeed, it has been this manner of reasoning, good at first view, though found afterwards but too fallacious, which has ruined their kingdom in part, and often brought the whole into the utmost hazard and jeopardy.

The king is anointed with plain oil of olives, which, being poured upon the crown of his head, he rubs into his long hair, indecently enough, with both his hands, pretty much as his soldiers do with theirs, when they get access to plenty of butter.

The crown is made in the shape of a priest's mitre, or head-piece; it is a kind of helmet, covering the king's forehead, cheeks and neck. It is lined with

blue taffety; the outside is half gold and half silver, of the most beautiful filligrane work.

The crown, in the time of Joas, was burnt, with part of the palace, on that day when Ras Michael's dwarf was shot in his own house before him. The present was since made by the Greeks from Symrna, who have large appointments here, and work with very great taste and elegance, though they have not near so much encouragement as formerly.

Upon the top of the crown was a ball of red glass, or crystal, with several bells of different colours within it. It seems to me to have formerly been no better than part of the stopper of a glass decanter. Be that as it may, the crown was lost in Yasous's time at the defeat of Sennaar. It was found, however, by a Mahometan, and brought by Guangoul, chief of the Bertuma Galla, to the frontiers of Tigre, where Michael, governor of that province, went with an army, in great ceremony, to receive it, and returning with it, gave it to king Yasous; making thereby a great advance towards the king's favour *.

Some people †, among the other unwarranted things they have advanced, have said, that, at the king's coronation, a gold ear-ring is put into his ears, and a drawn sword into his hand, and that all the people fall down and worship him; but there is no such ceremony in use; and exhibitions of this kind, made by the king in public, at no period seem to have suited the genius of this people. Formerly his face was never seen, nor any part of him, excepting sometimes

* An account of this transaction is given at great length in the Abyssinian Annals. Michael was employed in destroying Woldo, Kasmati of Enderta, at the time when he recovered the crown from Guangoul.—E.

† Vid. Le Grande's Hist. of Abyssinia.

his foot. He sits in a kind of balcony, with lattice-windows and curtains before him. Even yet he covers his face on audiences, or public occasions, and when in judgment. On cases of treason, he sits within his balcony, and speaks through a hole in the side of it, to an officer called Kal-Hatze, the "voice or word of the king," by whom he sends his questions, or any thing else that occurs, to the judges who are seated at the council-table.

The king goes to church every day, his guards taking possession of all the avenues and doors through which he is to pass, and nobody is allowed to enter with him, because he is then on foot, excepting two officers of his bed-chamber, who support him. He kisses the threshold and side-posts of the church door, the steps before the altar, and then returns home. Sometimes there is service in the church, sometimes there is not; but he takes no notice of the difference. He rides up stairs into the presence-chamber on a mule, and lights immediately on the carpet before his throne; and I have sometimes seen great indecencies committed by the said mule in the presence-chamber, upon a Persian carpet.

An officer, called Serach Massery, with a long whip, begins cracking and making a noise, worse than twenty French postilions, at the door of the palace before the dawn of day. This chases away the hyæna and other wild beasts; this, too, is the signal for the king's rising, who sits in judgment every morning fasting, and after that, about eight o'clock, he goes to breakfast.

There are six noblemen, of the king's own choosing, who are called Baalomaal *, or gentlemen of his

* Baalomaal, which, literally translated, is, "Master of his effects, or goods."

bed-chamber; four of these are always with him. There is a seventh, who is the chief of these, called Azeleffa el Camisha, groom of the robe or stole. He is keeper of the king's wardrobe, and the first officer of the bed-chamber. These officers, the black slaves, and some others, serve him as menial servants, and are in a degree of familiarity with him unknown to the rest of the subjects.

When the king sits to consult upon civil matters of consequence, he is shut up in a kind of box opposite to the head of the council table. The persons that deliberate sit at the table, and according to their rank, give their voices; the youngest or lowest officer always speaking first. The first that give their votes are the Shalaka, or colonels of the household troops; the second are the great butlers, men that have the charge of the king's drink; the third is the Badjerund, or keeper of that apartment in the palace called the Lion's House; and after these the keeper of the banqueting-house *. The next is called Lika Magwass, an officer that always goes before the king, to hinder the pressure of the crowd. In war, when the king is marching, he rides constantly round him at a certain distance, and carries his shield and his lance; at least he carries a silver shield and a lance pointed with the same metal, before such kings as do not choose to expose their person. That, however, was not the case in my time, as the king carried the shield himself, black and unadorned, of good buffalo's hide, and his spear sharp-pointed with iron. His silver ornaments were only used when the campaign was over, when these were carried by this officer. Great was the respect shewed formerly to this king in war, and even when engaged in battle with rebels, his own subjects.

No prince ever lost his life in battle till the coming

* Zeffan Bet.

of the Europeans into Abyssinia, when both the excommunicating and murdering of their sovereigns seem to have been introduced at the same time. The reader will see, in the course of this history, two instances of this respect being still kept up: the one at the battle of Limjour, where Fasil, pretending that he was immediately to attack Ras Michael, desired that the king might be dressed in his insignia, lest, not being known, he might be slain by the stranger Galla. The next was after the battle of Serbraxos, where the king was thrice in one day engaged with the Begemder troops for a considerable space of time. These insignia, or marks of royalty, are a white horse, with small silver bells at his head, a shield of silver, and a white fillet of fine silk or muslin, but generally the latter, some inches broad, which is tied round the upper part of the head over his hair, with a large double or bow-knot behind, the ends hanging down to the small of his back, or else flying in the air.

After the Lika Magwass comes the Palambaras; after him, the Fit-Auraris; then the Gera Kasmati, and the Kanya Kasmati, their names being derived from their rank or order in encamping, the one on the right, the other on the left of the king's tent; Kanya and Gera signifying *the right* and *the left*; after them the Dakakin Billetana Gueta, or under chamberlain; then the secretary * for the king's commands; after him the right and left Azages, or generals; after them Rak Massery, after him the Basha, after him the Kasmati of Damot, then of Samen, then Amhara, and, last of all, Tigre, before whom stands a golden cup upon a cushion, and he is called Nebrit, as being governor of Axum, or keeper of the book of the law supposed to be there.

* Tzafut tazazi. Kanya azimatch has been shortened into Kasmati or Cusmati. Dej-azimatch has become Dejashie.—E.

After the governor of Tigre comes the Acab Saat, or guardian of the fire, and the chief ecclesiastical officer of the king's household. Some have said that this officer was appointed to attend the king at the time of eating, and that it was his province to order both meat and drink to be withdrawn, whenever he saw the king inclined to excess. If this was really his office, he never used it in my time, nor, as far as I could learn, for several reigns before. Besides, no king eats in public, or before any person but slaves; and he never would choose that time to commit excess, in which he might be controuled by a subject, even if it was that subject's right to be present when the king eats, as it is not.

After the Acab Saat comes the first master of the household; then the Betwudet, or Ras; last of all the king gives his sentence, which is final, and sends it to the table, from the balcony where he is then sitting, by the officer called, as aforementioned, Kal-Hatze.

We meet in Abyssinia with various usages, which many have hitherto thought to be peculiar to those ancient nations in which they were first observed; others, not so learned, have thought they originated in Abyssinia. I shall first take notice of those that regard the king and court*.

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* These instances of resemblance between the Persians and Abyssinians are drawn from Jarricius *de Regno Persarum*. Mr Bruce was of opinion that no connection ever subsisted between the two nations; but if we consult the ancient history of Persia, many additional arguments may be brought to warrant the supposition, that the Homerite kings in Arabia, the parents of the Abyssinian sovereigns, borrowed the lustre of their thrones from the king of kings, the Persian emperor. The Persians conquered Yemen, which must at all times have had considerable intercourse with Susa and other provinces of the Parthian empire.—E.

The kings of Persia*, like these we are speaking of, were eligible in one family only, that of the Arsacidæ, and it was not till that race failed they chose Darius. The title of the king of Abyssinia is King of Kings; and such, Daniel† tells us, was that of Nebuchadnezzar. The right of primogeniture does not so prevail in Abyssinia, as to exclude election in the person of the younger brothers, and this was likewise the case in Persia‡.

In Persia§ a preference was understood to be due to the king's lawful children; but there were instances of the natural child being preferred to the lawful one. Darius, though a bastard, was preferred to Isogius, Xerxes's lawful son, and that merely by the election of the people. The same has always obtained in Abyssinia. A very great part of their kings are adulterous bastards; others are the issue of concubines, as we shall see hereafter; but they have been preferred to the crown by the influence of a party, always under the name of the Voice of the People

Although the Persian kings‖ had various palaces to which they removed at different times in the year, Pasagarda, the metropolis of their ancient kings, was observed as the only place for their coronation; and this, too, was the case of Abyssinia, with their metropolis of Axum.

The next remarkable ceremony in which these two nations agreed, is that of adoration, inviolably observed in Abyssinia to this day, as often as you enter the

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* Strab. lib. xv. p. 783. Joseph. lib. xviii. cap. 3. Procop. lib. i. de Bel. Pers.

† Dan. chap. ii.

‡ Procop. lib. i. cap. 11.

§ Arrian, lib. ii. cap. 14.

‖ Plut. in Artax. lib. xv. p. 730.

sovereign's presence. This is not only kneeling *, but an absolute prostration. You first fall upon your knees, then upon the palms of your hands, then incline your head and body till your forehead touches earth; and, in case you have an answer to expect, you lie in that posture till the king, or somebody from him, desires you to rise. This, too, was the custom of Persia; Arrian † says this was first instituted by Cyrus; and this was precisely the posture in which they adored God, mentioned in the book of Exodus.

Though the refusal of this ceremony would, in Abyssinia and Persia, be looked upon as rebellion or insult, yet it seems in both nations to have met with a mitigation with regard to strangers, who have refused it without giving any offence. I remember a Mahometan being twice sent by the prince of Mecca into Abyssinia during my stay there, who, neither time, would go farther than to put his hands across upon his breast, with no very great inclination of his head; and this I saw was not thought so extraordinary as to give offence, as it was all he did to his own sovereign and master.

We read, indeed, of a very remarkable instance of the dispensing with that ceremony being indirectly, yet plainly, refused in Persia to strangers. Conon ‡, the Athenian, had occasion for an interview with Artaxerxes, king of Persia, upon matters of great concern to both states; "You shall be introduced to the king by me, says the Persian minister to Conon, without any delay; do you only first consider with yourself, whether it is really of any consequence that you should

* Lucret. lib. v. Ovid. Metam. lib. i. Lucian. in Navig.
† Arrian, lib. iv. cap. 11. Exod. chap. 4. Matth. chap. 2.
‡ Justin, lib. vi. Omil. Prob.

speak with the king yourself, or whether it would not be as well for you to convey to him by letter, any thing you have to say; for it is absolutely necessary, if you are introduced into the king's presence, that you fall down upon your face and worship him. If this is disagreeable or offensive to you, your business shall nevertheless be equally well and quickly done by me." To which Conon very sensibly replied, "For my part, it never can be offensive *to me* to shew every degree of respect possible to the person of a king. I only am afraid that this salutation may be misinterpreted by my citizens, who, being themselves a sovereign state, may look upon this submission of their ambassador as a reproach to themselves, and inconsistent with their independency." Conon, therefore, desired to wave his introduction, and that his business might be done by letters, which was complied with accordingly.

I have already mentioned, transiently, the circumstance of the king not being seen when sitting in council. The manner of it is this: When he had business formerly, he sat constantly in a room of his palace, which communicated with the audience and council, by two folding-doors, or large windows, the bottom of which are about three steps from the ground. These doors, or windows, were latticed with cross bars of wood, like a cage, and a thin curtain, or veil of taffety silk, was hung within it; so that, upon darkening the inner chamber, the king saw every person in the chamber without, while he himself was not seen at all. Justin * tells us, that the person of the king of Persia was hid to give a greater idea of his majesty: and under Deioces, king of the

* Justin, lib. ii. In Abyssinia this lattice is called shekshek. —E.

Medes, a law was made that nobody might look upon the king; but the constant wars in which Abyssinia has been engaged, since the Mahometans took possession of Adel, have occasioned this troublesome custom to be wholly laid aside, unless on particular public occasions, and at council, when it is still observed with the ancient strictness. And we find, in the history of Abyssinia, that the army and kingdom have often owed their safety to the personal behaviour and circumstance of the king distinguishing and exposing himself in battle, which advantage they must have lost had the ancient custom been observed. However, to this day, when he is abroad riding, or sitting in any of his apartments at home where people are admitted, his head and forehead are perfectly covered, and one of his hands covers his mouth, so that nothing but his eyes are seen; his feet, too, are always covered.

We learn from Apuleius, that this was a custom in Persia; and this gave an opportunity to the magi to place Oropastus, the brother of Cambyses, upon the throne, instead of Merdis, who should have succeeded; but the covering of the face made the difference pass unperceived.

It is the constant practice in Abyssinia to beset the king's doors and windows within his hearing; and there, from early morning to night, to cry for justice as loud as possible, in a distressed and complaining tone, and in all the different languages they are masters of, in order to their being admitted to have their supposed grievances heard. In a country so ill governed as Abyssinia is, and so perpetually involved in war, it may be easily supposed there is no want of people, who have real injuries and violence to complain of: But if it were not so, this is so much the constant usage, that when it happens (as in the midst

of the rainy season) that few people can approach the capital, or stand without in such bad weather, a set of vagrants are provided, maintained, and paid, whose sole business it is to cry and lament, as if they had been really very much injured and oppressed; and this they tell you is for the king's honour, that he may not be lonely by the palace being too quiet. This, of all their absurd customs, was the most grievous and troublesome to me; and, from a knowledge that it was so, the king, when he was private, often permitted himself a piece of rather odd diversion to be a royal one.

There would sometimes, while I was busy in my room in the rainy season, be four or five hundred people, who all at once would begin, some roaring and crying, as if they were in pain; others demanding justice, as if they were that moment suffering, or if in the moment to be put to death; and some groaning and sobbing as if just expiring; and this horrid symphony was so artfully performed, that no ear could distinguish but that it proceeded from real distress. I was often so surprised as to send the soldiers at the door to bring in one of them, thinking him come from the country, to examine who had injured him; many a time he was a servant of my own, or some other equally known; or, if he was a stranger, upon asking him what misfortune had befallen him, he would answer very composedly, "Nothing was the matter with him; that he had been sleeping all day with the horses; that, hearing from the soldiers at the door I was retired to my apartment, he and his companions had come to cry and make a noise under my window, to do me honour before the people, for fear I should be melancholy, by being too quiet when alone; and therefore hoped that I would order them drink, that they might continue with a little more spirit." The

violent anger which this did often put me into, did not fail to be punctually reported to the king, at which he would laugh heartily; and he himself was often hid not far off, for the sake of being a spectator of my heavy displeasure.

These complaints, whether real or feigned, have always for their burden, Rete O Jan hoi! which, repeated quick, very much resembles Prete Janni, the name that was given to this prince, of which we never yet knew the derivation; its signification is, "Do me justice, O my king!"

Herodotus * tells us, that in Persia, the people, in great crowds, and of both sexes, came roaring and crying to the doors of the palace; and Itaphernes is also said to come to the door of the king making great lamentations.

I have now mentioned a council of state held in Abyssinia in time of danger or difficulty, where the king sitting invisible, though present, gives his opinion by an officer, called Kal Hatze. Upon his delivering the sentence from the king, the whole assembly rise, and stand upon their feet; and this they must have done the whole time the council lasted, had the king appeared there in person. According to the circumstances of the time, the king goes with the majority, or not; and if, upon a division, there is a majority against him, he often punishes the majority on the other side, by sending them to prison for voting against his sentiments; for, though it is understood by calling of the meeting, that the majority is to determine as to the eligibility of the measure, the king, by his prerogative, supersedes any majority on the other side; and so far, I suppose, has been an encroachment

* Herod. lib. iii.

upon the original constitution. This, I understand, was the same in Persia.

Xerxes *, being about to declare war against the Greeks, assembled all the principal chiefs of Asia in council. "That I may not," says he, "be thought to act only by my own judgment, I have called you together. At the same time, I think proper to intimate to you, that it is your duty to obey my will, rather than enter into any deliberation, or remonstrances of your own."

We will now compare some particulars, the dress and ornaments of the two kings. The king of Abyssinia wears his hair long; so did the ancient kings of Persia. We learn this circumstance from Suetonius and Aurelius Victor †. A comet had appeared in the war with Persia, and was looked upon by the Romans as a bad omen. Vespasian laughed at it, and said, if it portended any ill, it was to the king of Persia, because, like him, it wore long hair.

The diadem was, with the Persians, a mark of royalty, as with the Abyssinians, being composed of the same materials, and worn in the same manner. The king of Abyssinia wears it, while marching, as a mark of sovereignty, that does not impede, or incommode him, as any other heavier ornament would do, especially in hot weather. This fillet surrounds his head above the hair, leaving the crown perfectly uncovered. It is an offence of the first magnitude for any person, at this time, to wear any thing upon his head, especially white, unless for Mahometans, who wear caps, and over them a large white turban; or for priests, who wear large turbans of muslin also.

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* Herod. lib. iv.

† Suet. Vespas. cap. 23. Sex. Aurel. Victor. cap. 23

This was the diadem of the Persians, as appears from Lucian *, who calls it a white fillet about the forehead. In the dialogue between Diogenes and Alexander, the head is said to be tied round, with a white fillet †; and Favorinus, speaking of Pompey, whose leg was wound round with a white bandage, says, "It is no matter on what part of the body he wears a diadem." We read in Justin ‡, that Alexander, leaping from his horse, by accident wounded Lysimachus in the forehead with the point of his spear; and the blood gushed out so violently that it could not be staunched, till the king took the diadem from his head, and with it bound up the wound; which, at that time, was looked upon as an omen that Lysimachus was to be king, and so it soon after happened.

The kings of Abyssinia anciently sat upon a gold throne, which is a large, convenient, oblong, square seat, like a small bed-stead, covered with Persian carpets, damask, and cloth of gold, with steps leading up to it. It is still richly gilded; but the many revolutions and wars have much abridged their ancient magnificence. The portable throne was a gold stool, like that curule stool, or chair, used by the Romans, which we see on medals. It was, in the Begemder war, changed to a very beautiful one of the same form inlaid with gold. Xerxes is said to have been spectator of a naval fight sitting upon a gold stool ||.

It is, in Abyssinia, high treason to sit upon any seat of the king's; and he that presumed to do this would be instantly hewn to pieces, if there was not some other collateral proof of his being a madman. The

* Lucian. de Votis seu in Navigio, Esdras, lib. iii.
† Valer. Maxim. lib. vi. cap. 2.
‡ Justin, lib. xv.
|| Philostrat. lib. ii.

reader will find, in the course of my history, a very ridiculous accident on this subject, in the king's tent, with Guangoul, king of the Bertuma Galla.

It is probable that Alexander had heard of this law in Persia, and disapproved of it; for one day, it being extremely cold, the king, sitting in his chair before the fire, warming and chafing his legs, saw a soldier, probably a Persian, who had lost his feeling by extreme numbness. The king immediately leaped from his chair, and ordered the soldier to be set down upon it. The fire soon brought him to his senses; but he had almost lost them again with fear, by finding himself in the king's seat. To whom Alexander said, "Remember, and distinguish, how much more advantageous to man my government is than that of the kings of Persia *. By sitting down on my seat, you have saved your life; by sitting on theirs, you would infallibly have lost it."

In Abyssinia it is considered as a fundamental law of the land, that none of the royal family, who has any deformity, or bodily defect, shall be allowed to succeed to the crown; and, for this purpose, any of the princes, who may have escaped from the mountain of Wechne, and who are afterwards taken, are mutilated in some of their members, that thus they may be disqualified from ever succeeding. In Persia the same was observed. Procopius † tells us, that Zames, the son of Cabades, was excluded from the throne because he was blind of one eye; the law of Persia prohibiting any person that had a bodily defect to be elected king.

The kings of Abyssinia were seldom seen by their

* Val. Max. lib. v. cap. 16.—Q. Curt. lib. viii.

† Procop. lib. i. cap. 11.

subjects. Justin * says, the Persians hid the person of their king to increase their reverence for his majesty. And it was a law of Deioces †, king of the Medes, that nobody should be permitted to see the king; which regulation was as ancient as the time of Semiramis, whose son, Ninias, is said to have grown old in the palace, without ever having been known by being seen out of it.

This absurd usage gave rise to many abuses. In Persia ‡ it produced two officers, who were called the king's eyes, and the king's ear, and who had the dangerous employment, I mean dangerous for the subject, of seeing and hearing for their sovereign. In Abyssinia, as I have just said, it created an officer, called the king's mouth, or voice; for, being seen by nobody, he spoke of course in the third person, "Hear what the king says to you," which is the usual form of all regal mandates in Abyssinia; and what follows has the force of law. In the same style, Josephus thus begins an edict of Cyrus, king of Persia, "Cyrus, the king, says §"—And, speaking of Cambyses's rescript, "Cambyses, the king, says thus"—And Esdras also, "Thus saith Cyrus, king of Persia ‖"—And Nebuchadnezzar says to Holofernes, "Thus saith the Great King, Lord of the whole earth ¶;"—and this was probably the origin of edicts, when writing was little used by sovereigns, and little understood by the subject.

Solemn hunting-matches were always in use both

* Justin. lib. i.
† Herod. lib. i.
‡ Dio. Chrysost. Orat. 3. pro regno.
§ Joseph. lib. xi. cap. 1.
‖ Esdras, cap. 5.
¶ Judith, cap. 2.

with the kings of Abyssinia and those of Persia*. In both kingdoms it was a crime for a subject to strike the game till such time as the king had thrown his lance at it. This absurd custom was repealed by Artaxerxes Longimanus in one kingdom †; and by Yasous the Great in the other, so late as the beginning of the last century.

The kings of Abyssinia are above all laws. They are supreme in all causes, ecclesiastical and civil; the land and persons of their subjects are equally their property, and every inhabitant of their kingdom is born their slave; if he bears a higher rank it is by the king's gift; for his nearest relations are accounted nothing better. The same obtained in Persia. Aristotle calls the Persian generals and nobles, slaves of the great king ‡. Xerxes, reproving Pytheus, the Lydian, when seeking to excuse one of his sons from going to war, says, "You, that are my slave, and bound to follow me with your wife and all your family ‖." And Gobryas § says to Cyrus, "I deliver myself to you, at once your companion and your slave."

There are several kinds of bread in Abyssinia; some of different sorts of teff, and some of tocusso, which also vary in quality. The king of Abyssinia eats of wheat bread, though not of every wheat, but of that only that grows in the province of Dembea, therefore called the king's food. It was so with the kings of Persia, who ate wheat bread, Herodotus

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* Ctesias in Persicis. Xenophon, lib. i.
† Plutarch, in Apotegmat.
‡ De Mundo.
‖ Herod. lib. vii.
§ Xenoph. lib. iv.

says, but only of a particular kind, as we learn from Strabo*.

I have shewn, in the course of the foregoing history, that it always has been, and still is, the custom of the kings of Abyssinia, to marry what number of wives they choose; that these were not therefore all queens; but that among them there was one, who was considered particularly as queen, and upon her head was placed the crown, and she was called the Iteghe.

Thus, in Persia, we read that Ahasuerus loved Esther†, who had found grace in his sight, more than the other virgins, and he had placed a golden crown upon her head. And Josephus‡ informs us, that when Esther‖ was brought before the king, he was exceedingly delighted with her, and made her his lawful wife; and when she came into the palace, he put a crown upon her head. Whether placing the crown upon the queen's head had any civil effect, as to regency in Persia, as it had in Abyssinia, is what history does not inform us.

I have already observed, that there is an officer called Serach Massery, who watches before the king's gate all night, and at the dawn of day cracks a whip, to chace the wild beasts out of the town. This, too, is the signal for the king to rise, and sit down in his judgment-seat. The same custom was observed in Persia. Early in the morning, an officer entered the

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* Strabo, lib. xv.

† Esther, chap. ii.

‡ Joseph. lib. xi. cap. 6.

‖ If I remember right, it is D. Prideaux that says Esther is a Persian word, of no signification. I rather think it is Abyssinian, because it has a signification in that language. Eshte, the masculine, signifies an agreeable present, and is a proper name, of which Esther is the feminine.

king's chamber, and said to him, "Arise, O king! and take charge of those matters which Oromasdes has appointed you to the care of."

The king of Abyssinia never is seen to walk, nor to set his foot upon the ground out of the palace; and when he would dismount from the horse or mule on which he rides, he has a servant with a stool, who places it properly for him for that purpose. He rides into the anti-chamber to the foot of his throne, or to the stool placed in the alcove of his tent. We are told by Athenæus*, such was the practice in Persia, whose king never set his foot upon the ground out of his palace.

The king of Abyssinia very often judges capital crimes himself. It is reckoned a favourable judicature, such as, Claudian says, that of a king in person should be, "*Iger ad pœnas, ad præmia velox.*" No man is condemned by the king in person to die for the first fault, unless the crime be of a horrid nature, such as parricide or sacrilege. And, in general, the life and merits of the prisoner are weighed against his immediate guilt; so that, if his first behaviour has had more merit towards the state, than his present delinquency is thought to have injured it, the one is placed fairly against the other, and the accused is generally absolved when the sovereign judges alone.

Herodotus† praises this as a maxim of the kings of Persia in capital judgments, almost in the very words that I have just now used. And he gives an instance of it: Darius had condemned Sandoces, one of the king's judges, to be crucified for corruption, that is, for having given false judgment for a bribe. The

* Athen. lib. xii cap. 2.
† Herod. lib. vii.

man was already hung up on the cross, when the king, considering with himself how many good services he had done, previous to this, the only offence which he had committed, ordered him to be pardoned.

The Persian king, in all expeditions, was attended by judges. We find in Herodotus*, that, in the expedition of Cambyses, ten of the principal Egyptians were condemned to die by these judges, for every Persian that had been slain by the people of Memphis. Six judges always attend the king of Abyssinia to the camp, and, before them, rebels taken on the field are tried and punished on the spot.

People that the king distinguished by favour, or for any public action, were, in both kingdoms, presented with gold chains, swords, and bracelets †. These in Abyssinia are understood to be chiefly rewards of military service; yet Poncet received a gold chain from Yasous the Great. The day before the battle of Serbraxos, Ayto Engedan received a silver bridle and saddle, covered with silver plates, from Ras Michael; and the night after that battle, I was myself honoured with a gold chain from the king upon my reconciliation with Guebra Mascal, who, for his behaviour that day, had a large revenue most deservedly assigned to him, and a considerable territory, consisting of a number of rich villages; a present known to be more agreeable to him than a mere mark of honour.

A stranger of fashion, particularly recommended as I was, not needy in point of money, nor depending from day to day upon government for subsistence, is generally provided with one or more villages to fur-

* Herod. lib. iii.
† Xenoph. lib. i. Xenoph. lib. viii.

nish him with what articles he may need, without being obliged to have recourse to the king, or his ministers, for every necessary. Amha Yasous, prince of Shoa, had a large and a royal village, Emfras, given him to supply him with food for his table; he had another village in Karoota for wine; a village in Dembea, the king's own province, for his wheat; and another in Begemder for cotton cloths for his servants; so of the rest. After I was in the king's service, I had the villages that belonged to the posts I occupied; and one called Geesh, in which arises the sources of the Nile, a village of about eighteen houses, given me by the king at my own request; for I might have had a better, to furnish me with honey, and confirmed to me by the rebel Waragna Fasil, who never suffered me to grow rich by my rents, having never allowed me to receive but two large jars, so bitter with lupines, that they were of no sort of use to me. I was a gentle master, nor ever likely to be opulent from the revenues of that country; and more especially so, as I had under me, as my lieutenant *, an officer commanding the horse, whose thoughts were much more upon Jerusalem, and the holy sepulchre, than any gains he could get in Abyssinia by his employments.

Thucydides † informs us, that Themistocles had received great gifts from Artaxerxes king of Persia, when settled at Magnesia; the king had given him that city for bread, Lampsacus for wine, and Myuns to furnish him with victuals. To these Athenaeus adds two more, Palæscepsis and Percope, to yield him clothing and furniture. This precisely, to this day, is the Abyssinian idea, when they conceive they are en-

* Ammonios, Billetana Gueta to Ayto Confu.

† Thucyd. lib. i. Strabo. lib. xiv. Theod. Sic. lib. xi.

tertaining men of rank; for strangers, that come naked and vagabond among them, without name and character, or means of subsistence, such as the Greeks in Abyssinia, are always received as beggars, and neglected as such, till hunger sets their wits to work to provide for the present exigency, and low intrigues and practices are employed afterwards to maintain them in the little advancements which they have acquired; but no honour or confidence follows, or very rarely.

In Abyssinia, when the prisoner is condemned in capital cases, he is not again remitted to prison, which is thought cruel, but he is immediately carried away, and the sentence executed upon him. I have given several instances of this in the annals of the country. Abba Salama, the Acab Saat, was condemnd by the king the morning he entered Gondar, on his return from Tigre, and immediately hanged, in the garment of a priest, on a tree at the door of the king's palace; Chremation, brother to the usurper Socinios, was excuted that same morning; Guebra Denghel, Ras Michael's son-in-law, was likewise executed that same day, immediately after judgment; and so were several others. The same was the practice in Persia, as we learn from Xenophon*, and more plainly from Diodorus†.

The capital punishments in Abyssinia are the cross. Socinios‡ first ordered Arzo, his competitor, who had fled for assistance and refuge to Phineas, king of the Falasha, to be crucified without the camp. We find the same punishment inflicted by Artaxerxes upon

* Xenoph. lib. i.
† Diod. lib. xii.
‡ Vide Annals of Abyssinia, life of Socinios.

Haman*, who was ordered to be affixed upon the cross till he died. And Polycrates of Samos, Cicero tells us†, was crucified by order of Orætis, prætor of Darius.

The next capital punishment is flaying alive. That this barbarous execution still prevails in Abyssinia, is already proved by the fate of the unfortunate Woosheka, taken prisoner in the campaign of 1769, while I was in Abyssinia; a sacrifice made to the vengeance of the beautiful Ozoro Esther, who, kind and humane as she was in other respects, could receive no atonement for the death of her husband. Socrates‡ says, that Manes the heretic was flayed alive by order of the king of Persia, and his skin made into a bottle. And Procopius§ informs us, that Pacurius ordered Basicius to be flayed alive, and his skin made into a bottle, and hung upon a high tree. And Agathias‖ mentions, that the same punishment was inflicted upon Nachorages, *more majorum*, according to ancient custom.

Lapidation, or stoning to death, is the next capital punishment in Abyssinia. This is chiefly inflicted upon strangers called Franks, for religious causes. The Catholic priests in Abyssinia that have been detected there, in these latter days, have been stoned to death; and their bodies lie still in the streets of Gondar, in the squares or waste places, covered with the heaps of stones which occasioned their death, by being thrown at them. There are three of these heaps at the church of Abbo, all covering Franciscan friars;

* Esther, chap. vii. and viii.
† Cicero, lib. v. de Fin. lib.
‡ Ecclesiast. Histor. chap. xxii.
§ Procop. lib. i. cap. 5. de Bell. Pers.
‖ Agath. lib. iii.

and, besides them, a small pyramid over a boy, who was stoned to death with them, about the first year of the reign of David the IV *. This boy was one of four sons, that one of the Fransciscan friars had had by an Abyssinian woman in the reign of Oustas. In Persia, we find that Pagorasus (according to Ctesias†) was stoned to death by the order of the king; and the same author says, that Pharnacyas, one of the murderers of Xerxes, was stoned to death likewise.

Among capital punishments may be reckoned likewise the plucking out of the eyes; a cruelty which I have but too often seen committed in the short stay that I made in Abyssinia. This is generally inflicted upon rebels. I have already mentioned, that, after the slaughter of the battle of Fagitta, twelve chiefs of the Pagan Galla, taken prisoners by Ras Michael, had their eyes torn out, and were afterwards abandoned to starve in the valleys below the town. Several prisoners of another rank, noblemen of Tigre, underwent the same misfortune; and, what is wonderful, not one of them died in the operation, nor its consequences, though performed in the coarsest manner with an iron forceps, or pincers. Xenophon tells us ‡, that this was one of the punishments used by Cyrus. And Ammianus Marcellinus ‖ mentions, that Sapor, king of Persia, banished Arsaces, whom he had taken prisoner, to a certain castle, after having pulled out his eyes.

The dead bodies of criminals slain for high treason, murder, and violence, on the high way, at certain times, are seldom buried in Abyssinia. The streets of

* See this history of Abyssinia in vit. David IV.
† Vide Ctesiani Hoeschelii.
‡ Xenoph. lib. .
‖ Amm. Marc. lib. vii.

Gondar are strewed with pieces of their carcases, which bring the wild beasts in multitudes into the city as soon as it becomes dark; so that it is scarcely possible for any to walk in the night. Too many instances of this kind will be found throughout my narrative. The dogs used to bring pieces of human bodies into the house, and court-yard, to eat them in greater security. This was most disgustful to me, but so often repeated, that I was obliged to leave them in possession of such fragments. We learn from Quintus Curtius *, that Darius, having ordered Charidamus to be put to death, and finding afterward that he was innocent, endeavoured to stop the executioner, though it was too late, as they had already cut his throat; but, in token of repentance, the king allowed him the liberty of burial.

I have taken notice, up and down throughout my history, that the Abyssinians never fight in the night. This, too, was a rule among the Persians †.

Notwithstanding the Abyssinians were so anciently and nearly connected with Egypt, they never seem to have made use of paper or papyrus, but imitated the practice of the Persians, who wrote upon skins; and they do so to this day. This arises from their having early been Jews. In Parthia, likewise, Pliny informs us ‡, the use of papyrus was absolutely unknown; and though it was discovered that papyrus grew in the Euphrates, near Babylon, of which they could make paper, they obstinately rather chose to adhere to their ancient custom, of weaving their letters on cloth of which they made their garments. The Persians, more-

* Q. Curt. lib. iii. 2. 15.
† Q. Curt. v. 12.
‡ Plin. Hist. Nat. lib. xiii. cap. 11.

over, made use of parchment for their records, * to which all their remarkable transactions were entrusted; and to this it is probably owing, we have so many of their customs preserved to this day. Diodorus Siculus †, speaking of Ctesias, says, he verified every thing from the royal parchments themselves, which, in obedience to a certain law, were all placed in order, and afterwards were communicated to the Greeks.

From this great resemblance in customs between the Persians and Abyssinians, following the fashionable way of judging about the origin of nations, I should boldly conclude, that the Abyssinians were a colony of Persians; but this is very well known to be without foundation. The customs mentioned as only peculiar to Persia, were common to all the east; and they were lost when those countries were over-run and conquered by those who introduced barbarous customs of their own. The reason why we have so much left of the Persian customs is, that they were written, and so not liable to alteration; and being on parchment did also contribute to their preservation. The history, which treats of those ancient and polished nations, has preserved few fragments of their manners entire from the ruins of time; while Abyssinia, at war with nobody, or at war with itself only, has preserved the ancient customs which it enjoyed in common with all the east, and which were only lost in other kingdoms by the invasion of strangers; a misfortune Abyssinia has never suffered since the introduction of letters.

Before I finish what I have to say upon the manners of this nation, having shewn that they are the same people with the ancient Egyptians, I would inquire,

* Plin. lib. xiii. cap. 11.
† Diod. Sic. lib. ii.

Whether there is the same conformity of rules in the dietetique regimen, between them and Egypt, that we should expect to find from such a relation? This is a much surer way of judging than by resemblance of external customs.

The old Egyptians, as we are told by sacred Scripture, did not eat with strangers; but I believe the observation is extended farther than ever Scripture meant. The instance given of Joseph's brethren not being allowed to eat with the Egyptians was, because Joseph had told Pharoah that his brethren *, and Jacob his father, were shepherds, that he might get from the Egyptians the land of Goshen; a land, as the name imports, of pasturage and grass, which the Nile never overflowed, and it was therefore in possession of the Shepherds. Now, the Shepherds, we are told, were the direct natural enemies of the Egyptians who lived in towns. The Shepherds also sacrificed the god whom the Egyptians worshiped. We cannot (says Moses †) sacrifice in this land, the abomination of the Egyptians, lest they stone us. If the Egyptians did not eat with them, so neither would they with the Egyptians; but it is a mistake that the Egyptians did not eat flesh as well as the Shepherds; it was only the flesh of certain animals that they differed on, and did not eat.

The Egyptians worshipped the cow ‡, and the Shepherds lived upon her flesh, which made them a separate people, that could not eat nor communicate together; and the very knowledge of this was, as we are informed by Scripture, the reason why Joseph told Pharoah, when he asked him what profession his bre-

* Genesis, chap. xlvii. ver. 4.
† Exod. chap. viii. ver. 26.
‡ Herod. lib. ii. 104. sec. 40.

thren were of, "Your servants, says Joseph, are shepherds, and their employment the feeding of cattle;" and this was given out, that the land of Goshen might be allotted to them, and so they and their descendents be kept separate from the Egyptians, and not exposed to mingle in their abominations. Or, though they had abstained from these abominations, they could not kill cattle for sacrifice or for food. They would have raised ill-will among themselves, and, as Moses says, would have been stoned, and so the end of bringing them to Goshen would have been frustrated, which was to nurse them in a plentiful land, in peace and security, till they should attain to be a mighty people, capable of subduing and filling the land, to which, at the end of their captivity, God was to lead them.

The Abyssinians neither eat nor drink with strangers, though they have no reason for this; and it is now a mere prejudice, because the old occasion for this regulation is lost. They break, or purify, however, every vessel a stranger of any kind shall have ate or drank in. The custom then is copied from the Egyptians, and they have preserved it, though the Egyptian reason does no longer hold.

Some historians say, the Egyptian women anciently enjoyed a full liberty of intercourse with the males, which was not the case in the generality of eastern nations; and we must, therefore, think it was derived from Abyssinia; for there the women live, as it were, in common, and their enjoyments and gratification have no other bounds but their own will. They, however, pretend to have a principle, that, if they marry, they should be wives of one husband; and yet this principle does not bind, but, like most of the other duties, serves to reason upon, and to laugh at,

in conversation. Herodotus tells it was the same with the Egyptians *.

The Egyptians made no account of the mother what her state was; if the father was free, the child followed the condition of the father. This is strictly so in Abyssinia. The king's child by a negro-slave, bought with money, or taken in war, is as near in succeeding to the crown, as any one of twenty children that he has older than that one, and born of the noblest women of the country.

The men in Egypt † did neither buy nor sell; the same is the case in Abyssinia at this day. It is infamy for a man to go to market to buy any thing. He cannot carry water or bake bread; but he must wash the clothes belonging to both sexes, and, in this function, the women cannot help him. In Abyssinia the men carried their burdens on their heads, the women on their shoulders; and this difference, we are told, obtained in Egypt ‡. It is plain, that this buying, in the public market, by women, must have ended whenever jealousy or sequestration of that sex began; for this reason, it ended early in Egypt, but, for the opposite reason, it subsists in Abyssinia to this day.

It was a sort of impiety in Egypt to eat a calf; and the reason was plain, they worshipped the cow. In Abyssinia, to this day, no man eats veal, although every one very willingly eats a cow. The Egyptian § reason no longer subsists, as in the former case, but the prejudice remains, though they have forgot the reason.

The Abyssinians eat no wild or water fowl, not

* Herodot. p. 121. seqq. 92.
† Herodot. lib. ii. p. 101. sect. 35.
‡ Ibid.
§ Ibid. lib. 2. b. 104. sect. 4.

even the goose, which was a great delicacy in Egypt. The reason of this is, that, upon their conversion to Judaism, they were forced to relinquish their ancient municipal customs, as far as they were contrary to the Mosaical law; and the animals, in their country, not corresponding in form, kind, or name, with those mentioned in the Septuagint, or original Hebrew, it has followed, that there are many of each class that know not whether they are clean or not; and a wonderful confusion and uncertainty has followed through ignorance or mistake, being unwilling to violate the law in any one instance, through not understanding it.

The abhorrence of the old Egyptians for the bean is well known, and many silly reasons have been assigned for it; but that which has most met the approbation of the most learned men is, in my humble opinion, the weakest of them all. They say, the aversion to the bean arose from its resembling the phallus; but the crux ansata, or the cross with the handle to it, which is put in the hand of every Egyptian hieroglyphic of Isis, Osiris, or whatever the priests have called them, is likewise agreed by the learned to represent the phallus; and the figure of these nudities, without vail or concealment, is plain in all their statues. Now, I would ask, What is the reason why they abhor a bean, because it resembles those parts which, at the same time, by their own option or choice, are exposed in the hand or person of every figure which they exhibit to public view? The bean, however, is not cultivated in Abyssinia, neither is it in Egypt; lupines grow up in both, and lupines in both are eradicated like a weed, and lupines were what is called *faba Ægyptiaca*.

Though I cannot pretend to know the true reason of this, yet I will venture to guess: The origin

of great part of the religious observances of Egypt began with the worship of the Nile, and probably at the head of it. The country of the Agows, as well where the Nile rises, as in parts more distant, is all a honey country; not only their whole sustenance, but their trade, their tribute to the king, and the maintenance of a great part of the capital, depends upon honey and butter, the common food of the better sort of people when they do not eat flesh; it composes their drink also in mead or hydromel. Now, this country, when uncultivated, naturally produces lupines, and the blossoms of these, becoming food for the bees, give the honey such a bitterness, that no person will eat it, or use it in any way, in food or for drink. After the king had bestowed the village of Geesh upon me, though with the consent of Fasil its governor, that egregious shuffler, to make the present of no use to me, sent me, indeed, the tribute of the honey in very large jars, but it all tasted so much of the lupines, that it was of no earthly use whatever. Their constant attention is to weed out this bitter plant; and, when any of those countries are desolated by war, we may expect a large crop of lupines immediately to follow, and for a time, plenty of bad honey in consequence. It is, then, this destructive bean that Pythagoras, who, it is said, ate no flesh, regarded as an object of detestation; it was equally so among the Abyssinians and Egyptians, for the same reason. Both nations, moreover, have an aversion to hogs-flesh, and both avoid the touch of dogs.

It is here I propose to take notice of an unnatural custom which prevails universally in Abyssinia, and which in early ages seems to have been common to the whole world. I did not think that any person of moderate knowledge in profane learning could have been ignorant of this remarkable custom among the

nations of the east. But what still more surprised me, and is the least pardonable part of the whole, was the ignorance of part of the law of God, the earliest that was given to man, the most frequently noted, insisted upon, and prohibited. I have said, in the course of the narrative of my journey from Masuah, that, at a small distance from Axum, I overtook on the way three travellers, who seemed to be soldiers, driving a cow before them. They halted at a brook, threw down the beast, and one of them cut a pretty large collop of flesh from its buttocks, after which they drove the cow gently on as before. A violent outcry was raised in England at hearing this circumstance, which many did not hesitate to pronounce *impossible*, when the manners and customs of Abyssinia were to them utterly unknown. The Jesuits, established in Abyssinia for above a hundred years, had told them of that people eating what they call raw meat, in every page, and yet they were ignorant of this. Poncet, too, had done the same, but Poncet they had not read; and, if any writer upon Ethiopia had omitted to mention it, it was because it was one of those facts too notorious to be repeated to swell a volume.

It must be from prejudice alone we condemn the eating of raw flesh; no precept, divine or human, that I know, forbids it; and, if it is true, as later travellers have discovered, that there are nations ignorant of the use of fire, any law against eating raw flesh could never have been intended by God as obligatory upon mankind in general. At any rate, it is certainly not clearly known, whether the eating raw flesh was not an earlier and more general practice than by preparing it with fire; I think it was.

Many wise and learned men have doubted whether it was at first permitted to man to eat animal food at all. I do not pretend to give any opinion upon the

subject, but many topics have been maintained successfully upon much more slender grounds. God, the author of life, and the best judge of what was proper to maintain it, gave this regimen to our first parents. —"Behold, I have given you every herb bearing seed, which is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree, in the which is the fruit of a tree yielding seed: to you it shall be for meat*." And though, immediately after, he mentions both beasts and fowls, and every thing that creepeth upon the earth, he does not say that he designed any of these as meat for man. On the contrary, he seems to have intended the vegetable creation as food for both man and beast; "And to every beast of the earth and to every fowl of the air, and to every thing that creepeth upon the earth, wherein there is life, I have given every green herb for meat: and it was so†." After the flood, when mankind began to repossess the earth, God gave Noah a much more extensive permission: "Every moving thing that liveth shall be meat for you; even as the green herb have I given you all things‡."

As the criterion of judging of their aptitude for food was declared to be their moving and having life, a danger appeared of misinterpretation, and that these creatures should be used living; a thing which God by no means intended, and therefore, immediately after, it is said, "But flesh with the life thereof, which is the blood thereof, shall you not eat§;" or, as it is rendered by the best interpreters, "Flesh, or members, torn from living animals having the blood in

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* Gen. chap. i. ver. 29.
† Gen. chap. i. ver. 30.
‡ Gen. chap. ix. ver. 3.
§ Gen. chap. ix. v. 4.

them, thou shalt not eat." We see then, by this prohibition, that this abuse of eating living meat or part of animals while yet alive, was known in the days of Noah, and forbidden after being so known, and it is precisely what is practised in Abyssinia to this day. This law, then, was prior to that of Moses, but it came from the same legislator. It was given to Noah, and consequently obligatory upon the whole world. Moses, however, insists upon it throughout his whole law; which not only shews that this abuse was common, but that it was deeply rooted in, and interwoven with, the manners of the Hebrews. He positively prohibits it four times in one chapter in Deuteronomy *, and thrice in one of the chapters of Leviticus†— "Thou shalt not eat the blood, for the blood is the life; thou shalt pour it upon the earth like water."

Although the many instances of God's tenderness to the brute creation, that constantly occur in the Mosaical precepts, and are a very beautiful part of them, and though the barbarity of the custom itself might reasonably lead us to think that humanity alone was a sufficient motive for the prohibition of eating animals alive, yet nothing can be more certain, than that greater consequences were annexed to the indulging in this crime then what was apprehended from a mere depravity of manners. One‡ of the most learned and sensible men that ever wrote upon the sacred scriptures, observes, that God, in forbidding this practice, uses more severe certification, and more threatening language, than against any other sin, excepting

* Deut. chap. xii.
† Levit. chap. xvii.
‡ Maimon. more Nebochim.

idolatry, with which it is constantly joined. God declares, "I will set my face against him that eateth blood, in the same manner as I will against him that sacrificeth his son to Moloch; I will set my face against him that eateth flesh with blood, till I cut him off from the people."

We have an instance in the life of Saul * that shews the propensity of the Israelites to this crime. Saul's army, after a battle, flew, that is, fell voraciously upon the cattle they had taken, and threw them upon the ground to cut off their flesh, and eat them raw, so that the army was defiled by eating blood, or living animals. To prevent this, Saul caused roll to him a great stone, and ordered those that killed their oxen to cut their throats upon that stone. This was the only lawful way of killing animals for food; the tying of the ox and throwing it upon the ground was not permitted as equivalent. The Israelites did probably in that case as the Abyssinians do at this day; they cut a part of its throat, so that blood might be seen upon the ground, but nothing mortal to the animal followed from that wound. But, after laying his head upon a large stone, and cutting his throat, the blood fell from on high, or was poured on the ground like water, and sufficient evidence appeared that the creature was dead before it was attempted to eat it. We have seen that the Abyssinians came from Palestine a very few years after this; and we are not to doubt that they then carried with them this, with many other Jewish customs, which they have continued to this day.

The author I last quoted says, that it is plain, from all the books of the eastern nations, that their manner

* 1 Sam. chap. xiv. ver. 32. 33.

for eating flesh with the life, or limbs of living animals cut off with the blood, was that of religion, and for the purposes of idolatry, and so it probably had been among the Jews; for one of the reasons given in Leviticus for the prohibition of eating blood, or living flesh is, that the people may no longer offer sacrifices to devils, after whom they have gone a-whoring *. If the reader chooses to be further informed how very common this practice was, he need only read the Halacoth Gedaloth, or its translation, where the whole chapter is taken up with instances of this kind.

That this practice likewise prevailed in Europe, as well as in Asia and Africa, may be collected from various authors. The Greeks had their bloody feasts and sacrifices where they ate living flesh; these were called Omophagia. Arnobius † says, "Let us pass over the horrid scenes presented at the Bacchanalian feast, wherein, with a counterfeited fury, though with a truly depraved heart, you twine a number of serpents around you, and, pretending to be possessed with some god, or spirit, you tear to pieces, with bloody mouths, the bowels of living goats, which cry all the time from the torture they suffer." From all this it appears, that the practice of the Abyssinians eating live animals at this day, was very far from being new, or, what was nonsensically said, impossible. And I shall only further observe, that those of my readers that wish to indulge a spirit of criticism upon the great variety of customs, men and manners, related in this history, or

* Levit. chap. xvii. ver. 7.

† Arnob. adv. Gent. Clem. Alexan. Sextus Empiricus, lib. iii cap. 25. and Selden. de Jur. natur. and Gent. cap. 1. lib. vii.

have those criticisms attended to, should furnish themselves with a more decent stock of reading than, in this instance, they seem to have possessed; or, when another example occurs of that kind, which they call impossible, that they would take the truth of it upon my word, and believe what they are not sufficiently qualified to investigate.

Consistent with the plan of this work, which is to describe the manners of the several nations through which I passed, good and bad, as I observed them, I cannot avoid giving some account of this Polyphemus banquet, as far as decency will permit me; it is part of the history of a barbarous people; whatever I might wish, I cannot decline it.

In the capital, where one is safe from surprise at all times, or in the country or villages, when the rains have become so constant that the vallies will not bear a horse to pass them, or that men cannot venture far from home through fear of being surrounded and swept away by temporary torrents, occasioned by sudden showers on the mountains; in a word, when a man can say he is safe at home, and the spear and shield are hung up in the hall, a number of people of the best fashion in the villages, of both sexes, courtiers in the palace, or citizens in the town, meet together to dine between twelve and one o'clock.

A long table is set in the middle of a large room, and benches beside it for a number of guests who are invited. Tables and benches the Portuguese introduced amongst them; but bull hides, spread upon the ground, served them before, as they do in the camp and country now. A cow or a bull, one or more, as the company is numerous, is brought close to the door, and his feet strongly tied. The skin that hangs down under his chin and throat, which I think we call the

dew-lap in England, is cut only so deep as to arrive at the fat, of which it totally consists, and, by the separation of a few small blood vessels, six or seven drops of blood only fall upon the ground. They have no stone, bench, nor altar upon which these cruel assassins lay the animal's head in this operation. I should beg his pardon indeed for calling him an assassin, as he is not so merciful as to aim at the life, but, on the contrary, to keep the beast alive till he is totally eaten up. Having satisfied the Mosaical law, according to his conception, by pouring these six or seven drops upon the ground, two or more of them fall to work; on the back of the beast, and on each side of the spine, they cut skin-deep; then putting their fingers between the flesh and the skin, they begin to strip the hide of the animal half way down his ribs, and so on to the buttock, cutting the skin wherever it hinders them commodiously to strip the poor animal bare. All the flesh on the buttocks is cut off then, and in solid, square pieces, without bones, or much effusion of blood; and the prodigious noise the animal makes is a signal for the company to sit down to table.

There are then laid before every guest, instead of plates, round cakes, if I may so call them, about twice as big as a pan-cake, and something thicker and tougher. It is unleavened bread of a sourish taste, far from being disagreeable, and very easily digested, made of a grain called teff. It is of different colours, from black to the colour of the whitest wheat bread. Three or four of these cakes are generally put uppermost, for the food of the person opposite to whose seat they are placed. Beneath these are four or five of ordinary bread, and of a blackish kind. These serve the master to wipe his fingers

upon; and afterwards the servant for bread to his dinner.

Two or three servants then come, each with a square piece of beef in their bare hands, laying it upon the cakes of teff, placed like dishes down the table, without cloth or any thing else beneath them. By this time all the guests have knives in their hands, and their men have the large crooked ones, which they put to all sorts of uses during the time of war. The women have small clasped knives, such as the worst of the kind made at Birmingham, sold for a penny each.

The company are so ranged that one man sits between two women; the man with his long knife cuts a thin piece, which would be thought a good beef steak in England, while you see the motion of the fibres yet perfectly distinct and alive in the flesh. No man in Abyssinia, of any fashion whatever, feeds himself, or touches his own meat. The women take the steak and cut it length-wise like strings, about the thickness of your little finger, then cross-ways into square pieces, something smaller than dice. This they lay upon a piece of the teff bread, strongly powdered with black pepper, or Cayenne pepper, and fossile-salt; they then wrap it up in the teff bread like a cartridge.

In the mean time, the man having put up his knife, with each hand resting upon his neighbour's knee, his body stooping, his head low and forward, and mouth open, very like an idiot, turns to the one whose cartridge is first ready, who stuffs the whole of it into his mouth, which is so full that he is in constant danger of being choked. This is a mark of grandeur. The greater the man would seem to be, the larger piece he takes in his mouth; and the more noise he makes in chewing it, the more polite he

is thought to be. They have, indeed, a proverb that says, "Beggars and thieves only eat small pieces, or without making a noise." Having dispatched this morsel, which he does very expeditiously, his next female neighbour holds forth another cartridge, which goes the same way, and so on till he is satisfied. He never drinks till he has finished eating; and, before he begins, in gratitude to the fair ones that fed him, he makes up two small rolls of the same kind and form; each of his neighbours open their mouths at the same time, while with each hand he puts their portion into their mouths. He then falls to drinking out of a large handsome horn; the ladies eat till they are satisfied, and then all drink together, "Vive la Joye et la Jeunesse!" A great deal of mirth and joke goes round, very seldom with any mixture of acrimony or ill-humour.

All this time the unfortunate victim at the door is bleeding indeed, but bleeding little. As long as they can cut off the flesh from his bones, they do not meddle with the thighs, or the parts where the great arteries are. At last they fall upon the thighs likewise; and soon after the animal, bleeding to death, becomes so tough that the cannibals, who have the rest of it to eat, find very hard work to separate the flesh from the bones with their teeth like dogs.

In the mean time, those within are very much elevated; love lights all its fires, and every thing is permitted with absolute freedom. There is no coyness, no delays, no need of appointments or retirement to gratify their wishes; there are no rooms but one, in which they sacrifice both to Bacchus and to Venus *. The two

* In this particular they resemble the Cynics of old, of whom it was said, "Omnia quæ ad Bacchum et Venerem pertinuerunt in publico facere." Diogenes Laertius in Vit. Diogen.

men nearest the vacuum a pair have made on the bench by leaving their seats, hold their upper garment like a screen before the two that have left the bench; and, if we may judge by sound, they seem to think it as great a shame to make love in silence as to eat.—Replaced in their seats again, the company drink the happy couple's health; and their example is followed at different ends of the table, as each couple is disposed. All this passes without remark or scandal, not a licentious word is uttered, nor the most distant joke upon the transaction.

These ladies are, for the most part, women of family and character; and they and their gallants are reciprocally distinquished by the name Woodage *, which answers to what in Italy they call Cicisbey; and indeed I believe, that the name itself, as well as the practice, is Hebrew; *schus chis beiim*, signifies *attendants* or *companions of the bride*, or *bride's man*, as we call it in England. The only difference is, that in Europe the intimacy and attendance continues during the marriage, while, among the Jews, it was permitted only the few days of the marriage ceremony. The aversion to Judaism, in the ladies of Europe, has probably led them to the prolongation of the term.

It was a custom of the ancient Egyptians to purge themselves monthly for three days; and the same is still in practice in Abyssinia. We shall speak more of the reason of this practice in the botanical part of our work, where a drawing of a most beautiful tree †, used for this purpose, is given.

Although we read from the Jesuits a great deal about marriage and polygamy, yet there is nothing

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* Wodadje means a lover or friend (l'ami), from the Amharic wadadja to love.—E.

† Vide appendix, article Cusso.

which may be averred more truly than that there is no such thing as marriage in Abyssinia, unless that which is contracted by mutual consent, without other form, subsisting only till dissolved by dissent of one or other, and to be renewed or repeated as often as it is agreeable to both parties, who, when they please, cohabit together again as man and wife, after having been divorced, had children by others, or whether they have been married, or had children with others or not. I remember to have once been at Koscam in presence of the Iteghe, when, in the circle, there was a woman of great quality, and seven men who had all been her husbands, none of whom was the happy spouse at that time.

Upon separation they divide the children. The eldest son falls to the mother's first choice, and the eldest daughter to the father. If there is but one daughter, and all the rest sons, she is assigned to the father. If there is but one son, and all the rest daughters, he is the right of the mother. If the numbers are unequal after the first election, the rest are divided by lot. There is no such distinction as legitimate and illegitimate children from the king to the beggar; for supposing any one of their marriages valid, all the issue of the rest must be adulterous bastards.

One day Ras Michael asked me, before Abba Salama (the Acab Saat), "Whether such things as these promiscuous marriages and divorces were permitted and practised in my country?" I excused myself till I was no longer able; and, upon his insisting, I was obliged to answer, "That even if Scripture had not forbid to us as Christians, as Englishmen the law restrained us from such practices, by declaring polygamy felony, or punishable by death."

The king in his marriage uses no other ceremony than this:—He sends an Azage to the house where the lady lives, where the officer announces to her, "It

is the king's pleasure that she should remove instantly to the palace." She then dresses herself in the best manner, and immediately obeys. Thenceforward he assigns her an apartment in the palace, and gives her a house elsewhere in any part she chooses. Then when he makes her Iteghe, it seems to be the nearest resemblance to marriage; for whether in the court or the camp, he orders one of the judges to pronounce in his presence, "That he," the king, "has chosen his hand-maid," naming her, "for his queen;" upon which the crown is put upon her head, but she is not anointed.

The crown being hereditary in one family, but elective in the person, and polygamy being permitted, must have multiplied these heirs very much, and produced constant disputes; so that it was found necessary to provide a remedy for the anarchy and effusion of royal blood, which was otherwise inevitably to follow. The remedy was a humane and gentle one; they were confined in a good climate upon a high mountain, and maintained there at the public expence. They are there taught to read and write, but nothing else; 750 cloths for wrapping round them, 3000 ounces of gold, which is 30,000 dollars, or crowns, are, allowed by the state for their maintenance. These princes are hardly used; and, in troublesome times, often put to death upon the smallest misinformation. While I was in Abyssinia, their revenue was so grossly misapplied, that some of them were said to have died with hunger and of cold, by the avarice and hard-heartedness of Michael neglecting to furnish them necessaries. Nor had the king, as far as ever I could discern, that fellow-feeling one would have expected from a prince rescued from that very situation himself; perhaps this was owing to his fear of Ras Michael.

However that be, and however distressing the situation of those princes, we cannot but be satisfied with it when we look to the neighbouring kingdom of Sennaar, or Nubia. There no mountain is trusted with the confinement of their princes, but as soon as the father dies, the throats of all the collaterals, and all their descendents that can be laid hold of, are cut; and this is said to be the case in all the black states in the desert west of Sennaar, Dar Fowr, Sele, and Bagirma.

Great exaggerations have been used in speaking of the military force of this kingdom. The largest army that ever was in the field (as far as I could be informed from the oldes officers) was that in the rebellion before the battle of Serbraxos. I believe, when they first encamped upon the lake Tzana, the rebel army altogetner might amount to about 50,000 men. In about a fortnight afterwards, many had deserted; and I do not think (I only speak by hearsay) that, when the king marched out of Gondar, they were then above 30,000. I believe when Gojam joined, and it was known that Michael and his army were to be made prisoners, that the rebel army increased to above 60,000 men; cowards and heroes, old and young, veteran soldiers and blackguards, all came to be spectators of that desirable event, which many of the wisest had despaired of living to see. I believe the king's army never amounted to 26,000 men; and by desertion and other causes, when we retreated to Gondar, I do not suppose the army was 16,000, mostly from the province of Tigre *. Fasil, indeed, had not joined; and computing his army of 12,000 men (I make no account of the wild Galla beyond the Nile), I do not imagine that any king of Abyssinia ever commanded 40,000 effective men at any time, or upon any cause whatever, exclusive of his household troops.

* I fear that all these estimates are too high.—E.

Their standards are large staves, surmounted at the top with a hollow ball; below this is a tube in which the staff is fixed; and immediately below the ball, a narrow stripe of silk made forked, or swallow-tailed, like a vane, and seldom much broader. In the war of Begemder we first saw colours like a flag hoisted for king Theodorus. They were red, about eight feet long, and near three feet broad; but they never appeared but two days; and the success that attended their first appearance was such as did not bid fair to bring them into fashion.

The standards of the infantry have their flags painted two colours crosswise—yellow, white, red, or green. The horse have all a lion upon their flag *; some a red, some a green, and some a white lion. The black horse have a yellow lion, and over it a white star upon a red flag; alluding to two prophecies, the one, "Judah is a young lion," and the other, "There shall come a star out of Judah." This had been discontinued for want of cloth till the war of Begemder, when a large piece was found in Joas's wardrobe, and was thought a certain omen of his victory, and of a long and vigorous reign. This piece of cloth was said to have been brought from Cairo by Yasous II. for the campaign of Sennaar; and, with the other standards and colours, was surrendered to the rebels when the king was made prisoner.

The king's household troops should consist of about 8000 infantry, 2000 of which carry fire-locks, and supply the place of archers; bows have been laid aside for near a hundred years, and are only now used by the Waito, Shangalla, and some other barbarous inconsiderable nations.

* The first invention is attributed to the Portuguese.

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